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3 Time Out  Sun shines on Keshet	14 The Magazine  Baghdad express	24 Sports  Sampras ready for battle	INDEX Business10 International6 News in Focus13 Opinion8 Shabbat Shalom17 Sports24
--	--	---	---

Iraqi opposition: Saddam bugging inspectors

By JAY BUSHINSKY

Iraqi President Saddam Hussein is the UN arms inspectors' proverbial Big Brother, said Ahmad Alawi, head of a broadcasting station based in northern Iraq.

Alawi accused Saddam yesterday of staying one step ahead of foreign personnel probing his arsenal of unconventional weaponry by means of secret agents who use sophisticated listening devices which monitor their private conversations.

Contacted in London where he is consulting with exiled Iraqi opponents of the

Baghdad regime under the aegis of the Iraqi National Congress, Alawi said that Saddam's "mukhabarat" (intelligence) apparatus has concealed microphones in the rooms and offices used by UNSCOM (UN Special Commission) personnel at the Kanat a-Jeish military camp in Baghdad.

Bugging equipment also has been installed in the inspectors' private and professional gear. The Kanat a-Jeish camp serves as UNSCOM's headquarters as well as its living quarters.

Alawi gleaned his information from fellow Iraqis who fled to the UN-controlled sector of northern Iraq as well as

from "certain officials inside the Saddam's regime" with whom he is in secret contact.

"Besides my broadcasting work, I also am assigned to welcoming and debriefing defectors," he went on.

"Iraq has many security systems," Alawi said. "Each one of them does its own job of spying on UNSCOM." He said the data picked up at UNSCOM headquarters is transmitted to nearby A-Rashid camp.

The unit of Iraq's mukhabarat that regularly spies on UNSCOM was identified by Alawi as "Office 28." It is one of the intelligence apparatus 32 offices, he

added, and is headed by Col. Abdel Khalifa al Duleimi.

"Office 28 employs 120 persons, most of whom are disguised as drivers or other ordinary-looking people. They accompany UNSCOM's staff from the moment they leave their base until they return. Therefore, they know every move UNSCOM makes."

"Each agent is equipped with a small transmitter which enables him or her to report exactly where UNSCOM is going. The people at the prospective inspection site are thus able to get ready for the arms inspectors and hide everything that has to be hidden from them."

Another technique used by Saddam to foil UNSCOM's inspections is to station his Special Republican Guards outside all his palaces and military facilities.

These units normally provide security to the Iraqi military establishment. But in UNSCOM's case, their personnel can and do delay the entry of arms inspectors until orders are received from within that the site is clear.

Simultaneously, the Special Republican Guards notify the mukhabarat of UNSCOM's destination thus making it possible for it to instruct the people working on unconventional weapons project to leave while those

who stay behind conceal or remove all incriminating documents or materials.

Alawi, whose station broadcasts radio and television, told of a big operation north of Baghdad known as the "el Hadi project." Its code name is 858, he said, and its purpose is to monitor all incoming and outgoing UNSCOM communications locally and internationally.

El Hadi also is equipped to listen in on telephone conversations conducted throughout Iraq. In addition, a facility situated in A-Rashidiya, 30 kilometers north of Baghdad, can tune in on the satellite telephones used by UNSCOM. It employs 1,000 persons, he said.

Bassiouny: Azzam was a courier for Israeli women spies

By JAY BUSHINSKY

Azzam Azzam, the Israeli textile engineer imprisoned in Egypt as a spy, was duped into acting as a courier for an espionage ring that included an Egyptian national and two Israeli women, Egyptian Ambassador Mohammed Bassiouny told *The Jerusalem Post*.

The Egyptian diplomat stopped short of describing Azzam as a spy, contending that his conviction largely was due to his having "lied" to a Cairo court, and to a videotape and tape recording of his contacts with the individuals then under surveillance.

Azzam, 35, from the Galilee town of Maghar, was working in an Israeli-owned textile plant in the Egyptian capital when he was taken into custody and charged with espionage, along with Emad Abdel Hamid Ismail, an Egyptian national.

The indictment said Azzam confessed to receiving underwear soaked in invisible ink from Zahra Youssef Jreis and Mona Ahmed Shawahna, both residents of Nazareth. They were tried in absentia.

"Azzam may not have known exactly what he was carrying when he was arrested," Bassiouny said in an interview. "He was tricked by the two Israeli women from Nazareth who were in touch with an Egyptian spy for Israel."

Full interview, Page 18.



Keffiyeh redux
A poster depicting Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu in a keffiyeh, seen hanging in Jerusalem yesterday. The right-wing Ideological Front claimed responsibility for the posters, which were hung throughout the capital, saying they constitute 'legitimate democratic criticism.' Story, Page 2.

Netanyahu draws outline for final-status map

PM: No state for Palestinians

By JAY BUSHINSKY

Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu drew a new map of Israel and the adjacent Palestinian entity yesterday that keeps the Jordan Valley, Ezion Bloc, and other "security zones" under Israeli sovereignty. According to the plan, Israel also would control

need for Israeli control of Gaza's coastline.

In addition to retention of Jerusalem within its enlarged municipal boundaries and the Ezion Bloc of settlements, the prime minister also advocated a narrow "security zone" east of the Green Line.

"Most of the security zones have few Arab inhabitants," he said.

Netanyahu opposed Palestinian statehood, warning that Israel will take swift counter-measures if the PA declares an independent and

fully sovereign state.

On the other hand, he said the Palestinians should be allowed to "manage their own lives," describing this as a "functional division of authority." Overall security would remain exclusively in Israeli hands, he went on.

However, issues that concern both Israel and the PA, such as the environment and water resources, should continue to be dealt with jointly.

See PM, Page 22

Proposal draws mixed Palestinian response, Page 2
Norwegian FM shuttles between PM, Arafat, Page 3

the Gaza Strip coastline.

This is the territorial formula he intends to offer the Palestinian Authority in the final-status talks that he believes should start immediately and replace the interim stage of the peace process.

Netanyahu presented his territorial proposals at an Editors' Committee luncheon to mark the 50th anniversary of the United Nations General Assembly's vote in favor of the partition of Palestine for the establishment of Jewish and Arab states.

"The Jordan Valley's role is to serve as a buffer against a military attack from the east," Netanyahu said. He contended that Israel also must maintain a line of defense along its western flank. Hence the

Mordechai: Ties with US must improve

By ARIEH O'SULLIVAN

In his first public reference to the current tensions between Washington and Jerusalem, Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai said yesterday that Israel and the US must improve their relations.

"We must do everything to anchor and strengthen relations with the United States. There can be differences of opinion, just like there are in families, but this is a very important component for security," Mordechai said.

Speaking at a conference on Israel's national security doctrine at Bar-Ilan University, Mordechai also said it was vital to Israel's security to progress in the peace process with the Palestinians and to renew the dialogue with the Syrians.

Mordechai said that a national security council, which Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu wanted to set up, was superfluous and would only make the decision making process more cumbersome.

The inner cabinet serves this purpose, he said.

Shahak backs Levine

By ARIEH O'SULLIVAN

Chief of General Staff Lt.-Gen. Amnon Lipkin-Shahak came out in full support of OC Northern Command Maj.-Gen. Amiram Levine yesterday, accepting his explanation that his call for a unilateral withdrawal from Lebanon was taken out of context.

"I don't have any problem with Maj.-Gen. Levine," Shahak said. "I have a problem with the use of military people and opinions they express in closed military forums."

Shahak summoned military reporters to his office to express displeasure over the media's handling of internal differences of opinion among the army's top brass.

"You cannot have a public debate in the shadow of a security question which was discussed in a closed military forum. This is not because there is something to hide, but because it could hamper actions and help the enemy learn how to better prepare itself. We have to prevent this," Shahak said.

Shahak said he allowed Levine to hastily convene a press conference late Wednesday to explain his reported comments, out of consideration for the uncomfortable situation Levine would have found himself when facing soldiers in Lebanon.

Levine had been quoted as say-

ing he favored delivering a severe blow to Hizbullah and then carrying out a unilateral withdrawal from the security zone. At his press conference, Levine denied this was his position.

Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai also expressed support for Levine.

"Amiram Levine expressed his opinion in a closed military forum and he repeated it again

Senior IDF officer wounded in zone, Page 3

yesterday. He has from me all the backing he needs to continue in his job and do it successfully," Mordechai said.

Speaking before he gave a lecture at Bar-Ilan University, Mordechai said IDF commanders should express their opinions, but in the proper forums.

"They need to say what they are thinking. Maj.-Gen. Levine, as well as the chief of general staff, have expressed their opinions on what should be done regarding security in the North. Levine's comments were taken out of context and he will continue in his command."

See SHAHAK, Page 22

Neeman asks Reform: Accept Orthodox conversion

By HERB KEINON

Finance Minister Yaakov Neeman, head of the government committee trying to put together a compromise on the Reform and Conservative conversion issue, called on the Reform movement last night to accept the halachic guidelines for conversion for the sake of national unity.

"On issues of personal status it is forbidden to divide the nation," said Neeman, speaking at the opening session of the biannual convention of the Israel Movement for Progressive Judaism, held in Jerusalem.

"It is inconceivable that on matters of personal status there will be a split. The State of Israel needs one criterion that will be accepted by everyone. If not, my children will not be able to marry yours, and a situation will develop where there will be separate communities with separate membership cards."

See NEEMAN, Page 22

Likud probe panel resigns

By SARAH HONG

No sooner had the Likud inquiry committee convened for a first session yesterday afternoon than it disbanded.

All the members resigned after Science Minister Michael Eitan quit in a huff. In an allusion to Moshe Leon, Avigdor Lieberman's successor as director-general of the Prime Minister's Office,

Leon named as Lieberman replacement, Page 2

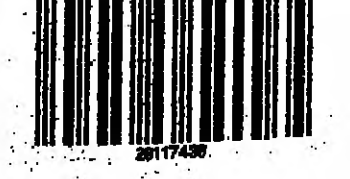
Eitan charged that the "malignant metastases of the Lieberman cancer still pervade and infect the Likud organs."

See LIKUD, Page 22

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NEWS

in brief

Arabs caught with explosives near Rachel's Tomb

Border policemen carrying out a routine vehicle inspection at a roadblock near Rachel's Tomb yesterday arrested two Palestinians after finding weapons and explosive material in the car the two were travelling in. One of the Palestinians was reported to be affiliated with Fatah.

Fearing more explosives were hidden in the car, border policemen closed off the area and sappers blew up the vehicle. Palestinian sources said IDF troops and border policemen arrested four Palestinians, two who were in the vehicle and another two standing nearby. The Arabs in the vehicle were named as Yusef Babon and Tihariy Attak, the sources said. The two reportedly worked for a well-known family in Bethlehem who dealt in ammunition. The sources denied that they were affiliated with any organization.

Margot Dudkevitch and Mohammed Najib

Author who praised Goldstein gets 8 months

Michael Ben-Horin, the author of *Baruch Hagever*, a controversial book praising Baruch Goldstein, who carried out the Machpelah Cave massacre, was sentenced to eight months in jail yesterday by Jerusalem Magistrate's Court Judge Ya'acov Tzaban. Ben-Horin had been convicted of incitement to racism and supporting a terrorist organization. He said he would appeal the verdict. Yoel Lerner and Yosef Dayan, who advised Ben-Horin in preparing the book, were sentenced to two months' suspended sentence and fined NIS 3,000.

Tzaban said there was no difference between what the three did and Moslem zealots praising Hamas suicide bombers.

American arrested in Onassis kidnap probe

Swiss police said yesterday in Geneva they had arrested a US citizen on suspicion of complicity with an alleged attempt to kidnap the heir to the Onassis shipping fortune.

The unidentified 32-year-old security consultant, a Swiss resident, was arrested in the northern town of Solothurn. He was being held at Geneva's Champ-Dollon prison, police said.

His arrest was the second this week in the case. A 36-year-old Swiss citizen was taken into custody Tuesday in Geneva.

Geneva-based Investigating Judge Jacques Delicourt suspects seven Israelis planned to kidnap 12-year-old Athena Roussel from the Swiss ski resort of St. Moritz last February.

Croatia appoints first ambassador to Israel

Croatia has appointed a first ambassador to Israel, less than three months after the two countries established full diplomatic relations, Croatian state media reported yesterday.

President Franjo Tudjman officially named Svyetlan Berkovic, former head of Diplomatic Academy at Croatian Foreign Ministry, as Croatia's first envoy in Israel.

"Relations with that country are of special interest to Croatia, due to Israel's role in the Middle East and its special position in the world," Tudjman said.

Croatia formally apologized in August for crimes committed by its Nazi-backed administration during World War II.

Woman killed by Hevra Kadisha car in Hadera

A Hevra Kadisha vehicle yesterday struck and killed a woman on a road to the new cemetery in Hadera. The woman was struck as she was crossing the road, and died on the scene. The driver apparently didn't see her. The victim's identity was unknown.

Posters of Netanyahu in keffiyeh hung in capital

By MARGOT DUDKEVITCH

Posters of Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu wearing a keffiyeh with the word "Liar" across them were pasted throughout the capital yesterday.

The Ideological Front movement claimed responsibility for the posters, and its leader, Itamar Ben-Gvir, called the posters "legitimate democratic criticism."

The posters — reminiscent of similar posters featuring Yitzhak Rabin in a keffiyeh, that were widely displayed in the months before his assassination — were denounced by right-wing MKs and the Council of Jewish Communities in Judea, Samaria and Gaza.

"This is not our way or style. If there is criticism to be made it should be directed to towards the policy and not the person," said

MK Benny Elon (Moledet).

Jerusalem Police detained former Kach activist Noam Federman and a minor affiliated with the Ideological Front. Both were released on bail last night.

Meanwhile, Netanyahu faces mounting opposition outside the Likud Party ranks as right-wing movements planned a mass rally against any further redeployment, to be held tomorrow night outside the Prime Minister's Residence.

Under the slogan "Bibi, don't surrender to US pressure," settler leaders, residents of Judea and Samaria, the Land of Israel Front and other right-wing groups are to take part in the rally.

Members of the Ideological Front are also expected to attend. Yehudit Tayar, spokeswoman for the Council of Jewish Settlements, said "If we see any such posters on Saturday we will immediately ask

the police to intervene."

Tayar said they expected at least 1,000 at the demonstration. "The rally is not against Netanyahu but rather to strengthen him and prevent him from bowing to the intense US pressure," she said.

Israel Radio reported that the Peace Now movement planned to hold a counter-demonstration demanding a freeze in settlement construction, at the same time on the other side of the road.

Meanwhile, Federman told Israel Television that Netanyahu is endangering the security of the entire country. "I think he is a traitor, and a liar, he has violated his promises," he said.

MK Hanan Porat (NRP) charged that Federman's words showed how little had been learned since Rabin's murder. Federman called Porat a hypocrite, charging that in the past he

had taken part in mass demonstrations opposing Rabin's policies, where slogans calling Rabin a traitor and a murderer were used.

Netanyahu refused to comment on the posters, quipping "the last time I wore a keffiyeh I was a lot thinner and had darker hair."

Itamar adds: Ma'ach Ma'amaz, a right-wing group responsible for the original poster showing Rabin in a keffiyeh, threatened yesterday to sue the Ideological Front for copyright infringement.

Meir Indor, the group's spokesman, and the graphic artist who worked with the group, said that a great deal of thought had been invested in the posters, and the attempt to compare Netanyahu and Rabin in their relationships with Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat does an injustice to Netanyahu.

PM taps Leon to replace Lieberman

By JAY BUSHINSKY

Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu announced that Moshe Leon, chief of his bureau, is to succeed Avigdor Lieberman as director-general of the Prime Minister's Office.

Leon's name came up during a speech by Netanyahu to the Israeli Management Center in Tel Aviv. The prime minister said Leon, who previously served as Netanyahu's adviser on economic affairs, was his candidate for the job vacated by Lieberman last Sunday.

His appointment requires cabinet approval and will be raised at Sunday's weekly cabinet meeting. Leon declined to comment in advance of the cabinet's decision.

In a parallel development, the special commission probing the abortive Mossad attempt to assassinate Hamas's political chief Khaled Mashal in Amman September 25, asked that Netanyahu's choice of Brig-Gen. Matti Harari as his military secretary be kept in abeyance until its findings are released.

"This is because the commission intends to relate in its conclusions to fundamental aspects of the prime minister's working relationship with the security establishment including the role of the military secretary," an official communiqué said.

Harari was named to replace Maj-Gen. Ze'ev Livne, who is now military attaché at the Israeli Embassy in Washington.

NRP sets out redeployment demands

By SARAH HONIG

The National Religious Party's executive bureau yesterday ratified the NRP Knesset faction's decision of a day earlier to link any further redeployment to "Israel's first decision on and fully spelling out its strategic demands for the country's final borders."

In addition the NRP stipulates that no more territorial concessions should be made if the Palestinians do not begin to show minimal signs of meeting their commitments and eradicating the terror infrastructure.

Though both NRP ministers stressed that they are not threatening to bring down the government, the party's resolution effectively raises high hurdles for Prime Minister's Binyamin Netanyahu's further redeployment proposal. The bureau resolution speaks of the need "to first decide on what Israel's ultimate red lines are before yielding any more territory and creating facts on the ground which may entirely contradict or jeopardize the ability to secure those final lines, and with them the most basic and vital of Israel's security and other interests."

Education Minister Zevulun Hammer spoke out forcefully against redeployment and vowed "to struggle against this plan. We will seek to put together a solid united front against it. There is simply no chance whatsoever that we can vote for this notion, without first having Israel's own future strategy mapped out and without any incentive from the Arab side to even begin to indicate that they understand the need for at least minimal reciprocity in honoring agreements." Yet Hammer came out against threatening to vote no confidence "so as not to shake up and weaken the best government we can hope for."

Transport Minister Yitzhak Levy wondered "how it is at all possible to just willy-nilly pull back again without so much as determining for ourselves what our long term interests are."

Winning numbers

In yesterday's weekly Payis Hazak drawing ticket number 077452 won NIS 1 million; while ticket number 715610 won the car.

Tickets: 787083, 077895, 793488, 327325, 042238, 804030, 622950 and 619023 won NIS 5,000. Tickets ending in 31723, 34374, 26401, 53004, 77561, 21245, 28651, 26713, 72978, 95231, 25822, 23525, 56234, 68532, 35654, 54169, 46270, 39668 and 98593 won NIS 1,000. Tickets ending in 254,294,673 and 778 won NIS 100. Tickets ending in 15,18 and 29 won NIS 30. Tickets ending in 20 and 78 won NIS 20. Tickets ending in 4 and 5 won NIS 10.

SOCIAL & PERSONAL

ENGAGED - Fern Allen, associate editor of The Jerusalem Post Magazine, is Joseph Rabin's daughter.



Remembering the fallen from Sinai Campaign

Aviva Kadouri, the mother of Efraim Kadouri, who fell during the 1956 Sinai Campaign, lights and salutes a memorial candle at Mt. Herzl in Jerusalem yesterday. A ceremony was held there to pay tribute to those who fell in the Sinai Campaign, attended by dozens of families of the fallen, National Infrastructure Minister Ariel Sharon and Deputy Knesset Speaker Emanuel Ziserman. Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi Yisrael Lani said at the ceremony: "For more than 41 years we have been searching our souls over whether we are worthy of the sacrifice made by the boys who fell. If these boys could rise from their graves would they say: 'For this society we prayed, and for this people we devoted our lives?' We must ask this question night and day and stand up to the challenge our comrades who fall placed before us."

PM proposal draws mixed PA reaction

By MARGOT DUDKEVITCH, LAMIA LAHOUD and MOHAMMED NAJIB

Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's proposal to hand over West Bank land to the Palestinians in five months if they combat terrorism and enter final status negotiations drew mixed Palestinian reactions yesterday.

"If Netanyahu wants to launch test balloons to tackle his problems with the Arabs, the United States and with the rest of the international community, we tell him we will not negotiate through the media," Palestinian Authority negotiator Saeb Erekat told reporters.

Other PA officials regard Netanyahu's proposal as a positive sign. A senior PA official noted that Netanyahu discussed the redeployment in principle with PA Chairman Yasser Arafat in a telephone conversation Tuesday night, but refrained from giving details about how much land Israel was willing to hand over.

The source claimed that Netanyahu had attempted to arrange a meeting with Arafat, adding that "if Arafat agreed to talk to him, it can't have been so bad." However, Arafat's spokesman Marwan Kanafani declared that the PA was not asking for a certain percentage of land, but rather for implementation of the Oslo accords which call for a pullback in three phases over 18 months.

At the end of the third phase, Kanafani said, the PA should be in control of all the land except set-

tlements and specified Israeli military locations. He stressed the purpose of the three-phase redeployment was to hand over most of the land to the PA before completing final status talks.

"This was meant to create confidence between the two sides, and to assure the Palestinians that Israel was serious about exchanging land for peace," he said. He rejected the link between the PA's willingness to combat terror and the implementation of the next phase of redeployment, calling it a pretext to avoid fulfilling Israeli obligations.

Rather than linking the two, Kanafani said the issues should be discussed separately. "Security gains more and more sympathy as a legitimate demand from the international community and the PA," he said. "The PA cannot fight terror alone, but needs Israel to cooperate with them."

PA Preventive Security Chief in Gaza Mohammed Dahlan agreed with Kanafani. According to Dahlan, the PA is watching Hamas carefully and has not changed its policy of fighting terror. Dahlan stressed it was in the PA's interest to prevent any attacks since new terror attacks would only turn everybody including the Americans against the Palestinians and further delay implementation of the Oslo agreement.

Meanwhile, Netanyahu's political adviser David Bar-Ilan said in response to Palestinian declarations regarding the planned establishment of a Palestinian state on May 5, 1999, that if the Palestinians carry out such unilateral action, Israel will be forced into taking unilateral action of its own.

Kanafani said "the Palestinian State will exist when the PA decides the time is suitable, and Arafat will inform Netanyahu when the time comes."

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We, members of the Bar-Ilan University faculty, to whom the unity of the Jewish people is a precious value, are conscious of the great crisis which threatens this unity. We call on representatives of the religious establishment and representatives of non-Orthodox movements to support the compromise which appears to be emerging from the proceeding of the Ne'eman Committee. Any compromise solution must fall within the parameters of halakha and provide formal representation to non-Orthodox movements.

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הכדא מן האל



Norwegian Foreign Minister Knut Vollebaek (left) shares a joke with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu yesterday during their meeting in Tel Aviv. (Reuters)

Norwegian FM launches shuttle between Arafat, PM

By JAY BUSHINSKY and news agencies

Norway's foreign minister Knut Vollebaek undertook an impromptu round of shuttle diplomacy yesterday, relaying the gist of his discussions with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Foreign Minister David Levy in Jerusalem to Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat in Ramallah.

The Norwegian diplomat had conferred on Tuesday with Arafat on prospects to advance the peace process and informed the prime minister of this conversation.

In turn, Netanyahu briefed Vollebaek on the political steps Israel is taking in an effort to advance the Middle East peace process, a communiqué issued by the prime minister's bureau said.

Foreign Minister David Levy also discussed this initiative with him.

Vollebaek said that in spite of the difficulties the Oslo agreement still constitutes "a very good basis for the peace process."

Vollebaek said yesterday he

hopes Israel and the Palestinians will extend the mandate of the 22 Norwegian observers in Hebron.

During his visit, Vollebaek said the observers are doing "a very good job" in reducing tension between the Jewish settlers in Hebron and the tens of thousands of Palestinians surrounding them.

"I think it's very important to have them there for the stability," Vollebaek told reporters after a meeting with Levy. The observers have been in Hebron since May 1996. Their present mandate runs out at the end of January.

The settlers have expressed hostility to the observers, whom they perceive as biased in favor of the Palestinians. The Palestinians have complained that the unarmed observers cannot protect them against harassment by the settlers.

Levy refused to say whether Israel would comply with a reported request from Norway to be allowed to interrogate a former Israeli intelligence officer in connection with a botched Mossad operation in Norway 24 years ago.

By DAVID RUDGE

A senior IDF officer was lightly wounded in an apparent ambush by Hizbullah gunmen near a South Lebanese Army outpost in the northeastern sector of the security zone yesterday afternoon.

Col. Yair was hit by bullets in one arm and in the leg by shrapnel from mortar rounds. He was treated in the field and evacuated by helicopter to Haifa's Rambam Hospital more than two hours later.

Dr. Zvi Ben-Israel, deputy director of the hospital, said the officer was suffering from a fractured arm, close to the elbow, caused by bullet wounds. "He also has light injuries to his legs, from frag-

ments, which are relatively superficial," said Ben-Israel.

He said the wounded officer had undergone an operation for his injuries and was then transferred to the hospital's surgical ward. He was reported in satisfactory condition.

The incident occurred near the SLA's Soujoud outpost, while Col. Yair and his troops were either en route to or leaving the position. It appears from the reports that the troops were on foot when they suddenly came under fire from close range from Hizbullah gunmen in the area.

Almost simultaneously Hizbullah mortar crews began firing rounds at the same area, apparently to give the squad on the

ground the chance to retreat.

According to the reports, Col. Yair was hit in the first burst of fire. The soldiers with him returned fire, although the gunmen apparently managed to escape unharm.

The mortar barrage continued, pinning the unit led by Col. Yair to the ground. IDF gunners returned fire and later IAF warplanes went into action.

The IDF Spokesman said the planes attacked terrorist targets in the Jabal Soujoud region. The pilots reported accurate hits and all planes returned safely.

Northern Command is to investigate the circumstances surrounding the incident, including the possibility that gunmen knew of Col.

Yair's movements beforehand and planned the ambush accordingly.

The question of whether it was necessary for such a high-ranking officer to be moving around in an area where Hizbullah gunmen are known to operate is also expected to come under scrutiny.

Meanwhile, the Grapes of Wrath monitoring group yesterday completed its deliberations into complaints by Israel over the shelling of Beit Leif village, inside the security zone, on Sunday in which eight residents were killed and several others wounded.

The five-nation committee set up to supervise the Grapes of Wrath understandings condemned those responsible for the shelling. Israel's representative to the

monitoring group submitted fragments of a mortar round which hit the village. Writing on it showed that it was made by Iran's military industries.

The committee accepted Israel's claim that Katyusha rocket fire on Western Galilee on the same day as the Beit Leif shelling constituted a breach of the understandings.

The Lebanese delegation confirmed its commitment to the clause in the understandings which ban attacks from Lebanon on Israeli territory.

The monitoring group called on the relevant authorities to take all necessary steps to prevent any such breaches of the understandings in the future.

Border towns demand gov't clarify stance on Lebanon

By DAVID RUDGE

The chairman of the forum of heads of border line communities Shlomo Buhbut yesterday called on the government to clearly state its policies regarding the security zone.

"The government is allowing this debate, which has spilled over into the media, to continue without taking any decisions," said Buhbut, who is also mayor of Ma'alot-Tarshiha.

"What's happening today is harming the morale of the soldiers and that of residents in the confrontation line region. There's a feeling that we are being bought and sold," he said.

"I expect the government to take decisions and adhere to them - not like what happened on Sunday when Katyusha rockets hit Western Galilee and the IDF decided not to respond in order not to annoy Hizbullah."

"I think that this was a mistake because Hizbullah and [Lebanese Prime Minister] Rafik Hariri should know that residents in the north are not hostages. They should know that if Katyushas or shells fall here they will get it back sevenfold."

"I agree with the defense minister who says that as long as there is no political solution and there is nobody to talk with there [in Lebanon] we cannot withdraw."



Lebanese holding pictures of their relatives demonstrate in front of the Nakoura United Nations offices this week, to protest the killing of civilians in military actions. On Sunday, eight people were killed in the village of Beit Leif by Hizbullah and Amal shelling. (Reuters)

"If, however, a decision were to be taken to withdraw the government would have to make it clear to the Lebanese government that we only recognize it and not Hizbullah and that we would respond severely for any Katyusha rocket attack, infiltration or shooting across the border into Israeli territory."

"Secondly, the government would have to make it clear to the Lebanese government that we only recognize it and not Hizbullah and that we would respond severely for any Katyusha rocket attack, infiltration or shooting across the border into Israeli territory."

"If this were to happen, it would be tantamount to a declaration of war and Beirut would suffer in consequence. If there were to be an unilateral withdrawal without first solving these problems, we along the confrontation line would be in trouble."

"In the meantime, I don't see any solution to the problem other than for the IDF, backed by the SLA, to remain in south Lebanon and respond more forcefully than at present, without showing any weakness," he added.

Politicians debate Lebanon - and the debate about Lebanon

By MICHAEL YUDELMAN

Cabinet ministers and opposition leaders continued to debate a unilateral withdrawal from Lebanon, following reports that OC Northern Command Maj. Gen. Levine had advocated such a withdrawal, reports that Levine denied Wednesday night.

But the debate itself was also a subject for debate. Agriculture Minister Rafael Eitan said a public debate on this issue "is good only for the enemy and is bad for the morale. It is harmful to the IDF and the state. Some things should be debated in the appropriate forums and not in public."

"These leaks are a national disaster. If we don't put a stop to them we're helping the enemy, and for what? For one moment of publicity?"

Eitan said Levine "had better leave the talking to the politicians. Officers shouldn't talk and then justify themselves. When I was chief of staff I took measures against officers who sounded off."

But Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai said he is in favor of a debate regarding Israel's remaining in Lebanon, stressing it is the right and duty of army commanders to make their professional opinions known. However, he added, they must do so within the military framework, as Levine indeed did.

Mordechai stressed that the IDF carries out missions according to instructions from the political leaders.

Internal Security Minister

Avigdor Kahalani called for "gradual withdrawal" from Lebanon without waiting for a peace agreement with Syria.

"As one who fought there and knows the area well, I ask myself if staying in Lebanon is doing anything to protect the state. I don't believe it does," Kahalani said.

He noted "we must find a way to withdraw gradually, and place a multi-national force there. Today people link the withdrawal to [a settlement on] the Golan, saying if we give it back, we'll get quiet in Lebanon. But Syria is using the Lebanese section to harm Israel. If we withdraw, it will take away Syria's excuse to attack us."

National Infrastructure Minister Ariel Sharon denied he had spoken in favor of withdrawing unilaterally from Lebanon, noting that even in peace, Israel must maintain control of its defense.

"One principle remains constant, even if we achieve peace: The security of the Jews and their defense in the Jewish state must be kept only in our hands," Sharon said.

Labor Party leader Ehud Barak said there is no cause to fire Levine, stating that the freedom of debate within the IDF is vital, including a debate on remaining in Lebanon.

"From what I understand," Barak said, "Levine stated again that he does not advocate unilateral withdrawal without an agreement and I agree with him." Former deputy defense minister General Ori Orr (Labor) said the

public debate is legitimate in a democracy and strengthens the soldiers' motivation to serve in Lebanon. He opposes a unilateral withdrawal.

"At present there is no opening for a settlement in Lebanon, because Syria hasn't changed its position, the Beirut government is not in control of the south and the Hizbullah continues to act there," he said.

Meretz was divided in its

views. MK Dedi Zucker urged Israel to take control of the situation in Lebanon by initiating a unilateral withdrawal, after the IDF presents a plan to protect the northern settlements. "A gradual withdrawal will necessitate a movement of international forces - including Syria and Lebanon, who would not be interested in leaving a vacuum there," he said.

However, Meretz chairman MK Yossi Sarid strongly object-

ed to a withdrawal, saying it would "erode the security zone and bring the Hizbullah 50 to 100 meters from the northern settlements. It will require every bus moving in the north and every

farmer tilling his field to have permanent security protection, and all this only until the first shot is fired. Then Israel will have to take Lebanon again and suffer casualties, both civilian

and military. "Sharon and Kahalani don't want to pay for stability with the Golan, so the soldiers in Lebanon are paying the price for them - we all are, every day."

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Our Greatest Danger - Signed Undertakings of the United States

- 1 In 1967, the agreement between President Johnson and Israel on keeping the Straits of Tiran open, was broken by the United States. The Six Days War was the direct outcome.
- 2 In 1970, during the War of Attrition, Israel agreed to a cease-fire on condition - it was endorsed by the US - that Egyptian SAM (surface-to-air) missiles would not be moved forward to the Suez Canal. They were moved forward very soon thereafter without any reaction on the part of the US. That breach cost the lives of many of our pilots in the Yom Kippur War.
- 3 In 1975, Israel gave up the strategic Mitla and Gidi Passes, and the Abu Rodess oil fields in Sinai, in return for US signed undertakings

- * to supply F 15 planes exclusively to Israel
- * not to negotiate with the PLO without Israel's consent
- * not to provide Saudia with AWAC spy planes.

In 1978, President Carter reneged on all these commitments, and subsequently President Reagan gave Saudia the AWACS (despite Senate opposition).

The reason given for these broken promises was: "Conditions have changed".

Surely, Arafat's contempt for his explicit obligations - to revoke the Palestinian Covenant, to extradite the Arab murderers, and numerous other undertakings - is enough of a "changed condition" to justify our annulling the Oslo Accord.

The pledge of the United States to provide us with arms was broken just when we needed them most. An embargo was placed on Israel

- in 1948, during the War of Independence and

- in 1973, during the Yom Kippur War.

And in 1981, when Israel bombed the Osirak Nuclear Reactor in Iraq, the United States (and Shimon Peres) deplored the action. During the Gulf War, however, ten years later, Richard Cheney, US Defense Secretary, said: "I thank G-d every day for Israel's courageous action". It was indeed a major factor in the American victory over Saddam Hussein.

The Research Center for International Relations
Israel Branch

NEWS

in brief

Man charged with murdering son-in-law

Michael Walgerstein, 69 of Ofakim, was charged yesterday in Beersheba District Court with murdering his son-in-law, Viktor Zarkov. Zarkov, neighbors said, was often drunk and would beat his wife, Walgerstein's daughter. Walgerstein, apparently fed up with the beatings, allegedly hit Zarkov last Friday night with an ax, and then slit his throat with a knife.

The prosecution claims Walgerstein killed Zarkov in cold blood, and that there had been no provocation on the part of the deceased. Walgerstein claims that Zarkov had approached him with the ax, and that he had killed Zarkov in self-defense. *Tim*

Sara Netanyahu asks court to bar book

Officials at Ramat Gan Family Court yesterday agreed to hear behind closed doors Sara Netanyahu's petition to bar her former husband Doron Neuberger from publishing a book about her. The court ruled the dispute between the two was a family matter and not a business dispute, and thus the proceedings need not be made public.

Netanyahu is seeking to prevent Neuberger from publishing letters and documents relating to their relationship. *from*

Ministry wants extension of US teen's remand

The Justice Ministry has prepared a request to extend by another 15 days the remand of a teenager wanted in the US for the brutal murder of another youngster in Montgomery County, Maryland.

The request will be presented to the Jerusalem Magistrate's Court on Sunday.

Lawyers for the youth have claimed he is an Israeli citizen, since he was born to a father with Israeli citizenship, and therefore cannot be extradited to stand trial in the US. A formal extradition request arrived from the US on Wednesday.

Officials in the ministry said yesterday they expected the justice minister to make his decision on whether the teen was eligible for extradition within the next fortnight. The minister's recommendation will be sent to the Jerusalem District Court which must rule on the issue. *Barshava Tsur*

Frenkel: Israel must tackle unemployment first

MKs must support the government's budget proposal and not demand tax increases, Bank of Israel Governor Jacob Frenkel said yesterday.

However, the key problem facing the economy today is unemployment, said Frenkel. The way to solve this is by providing the correct economic environment for job creation, accompanied by professional and technological training.

David Harris

Teacher dies of heart attack in school

Efforts by pupils at the ORT Guttman School in Netanya to save the life of teacher Carmela Oren, 59, after she collapsed in school, failed yesterday, and Oren died at the scene. Oren suffered a heart attack as she entered her classroom.

Her pupils, many of whom are Magen David Adom volunteers, tried to revive her until a mobile cardiac unit arrived, but were unable to do so.

Oren won an Education Ministry prize not long ago for her life's work as a teacher. *Artyeh Dean Cohen*

Strike to go ahead on Sunday

By DAVID HARRIS

The Histadrut will stage an open-ended public sector strike, beginning at midnight tomorrow night, despite plans for fresh negotiations between the strike organizers and the Treasury, according to the labor federation spokesman Yossi Leibovitch.

Some 150,000 clerical workers are expected to strike. It will primarily affect local authority services but it will also affect universities, the health funds, the Jewish Agency, the Jewish National Fund, WIZO and Na'amat offices.

Ports and airports will not be affected by the action.

The long-term dispute is over the Histadrut's objections to Treasury plans for pension reforms and the government-approved program for increasing economic growth, including demonopolization and privatization. Sunday's strike, however, is more against the perceived attack on workers' rights after 55 local authorities agreed to undergo a series of cost-cutting measures.

"If the Treasury thinks we're slaves and tries all the time to hit us, we have no choice but to launch a ceaseless fight," said clerks' union chairman Leon Morozovsky during an emergency meeting of senior Histadrut officials.

"The Histadrut has already decided to go ahead with the strike; the workers have been pre-

pared and the shop stewards are putting the wheels in motion," a Treasury official said yesterday.

So far no meeting has been scheduled between the Histadrut and Treasury to try and avert the industrial action. However, the key negotiators - Treasury Director-General Shmuel Slavin and strike organizer Shlomo Shani - are attempting to arrange a meeting on Sunday. If the two sides do meet, the strike will go ahead nonetheless, said Leibovitch.

The two sides met earlier this week, in accordance with a directive from the National Labor Court, but the meeting failed to produce concrete results.

The Union of Local Authorities in Israel (ULAI) yesterday asked the court to intervene to prevent the strike. The court hearing is scheduled for today, but is unlikely to be concluded until after Shabbat, according to ULAI spokesman Hillel Goldstein.

Tim adds:

The Histadrut also declared work disputes yesterday at the Israel Electric Corp., the civil administration, the Labor and Social Affairs Ministry, the National Insurance Institute, the computer department of the Treasury's tax unit, the Transport Ministry, and at the Education Ministry's rural education department.

Declaration of a work dispute allows sanctions to commence in 15 days.

Workers block roads

By DAVID RUDGE and Tim

Angry Israeli Aircraft Industry workers blocked roads around the country yesterday to protest plans to shut plants which they fear could lead to layoffs.

Thousands of IAI workers marched along the road near Ben-Gurion Airport toward the Jerusalem-Tel Aviv highway, after holding an emergency meeting at the company's headquarters to protest government delays in funding and plans to shut factories and sell industry lands.

About 100 police officers, supported by a helicopter that hovered overhead, came to the site to maintain order.

Some IAI workers went to block roads at the Sha'ar Hagai and Ben-Shimon intersections. In Beersheba, two busloads of IAI

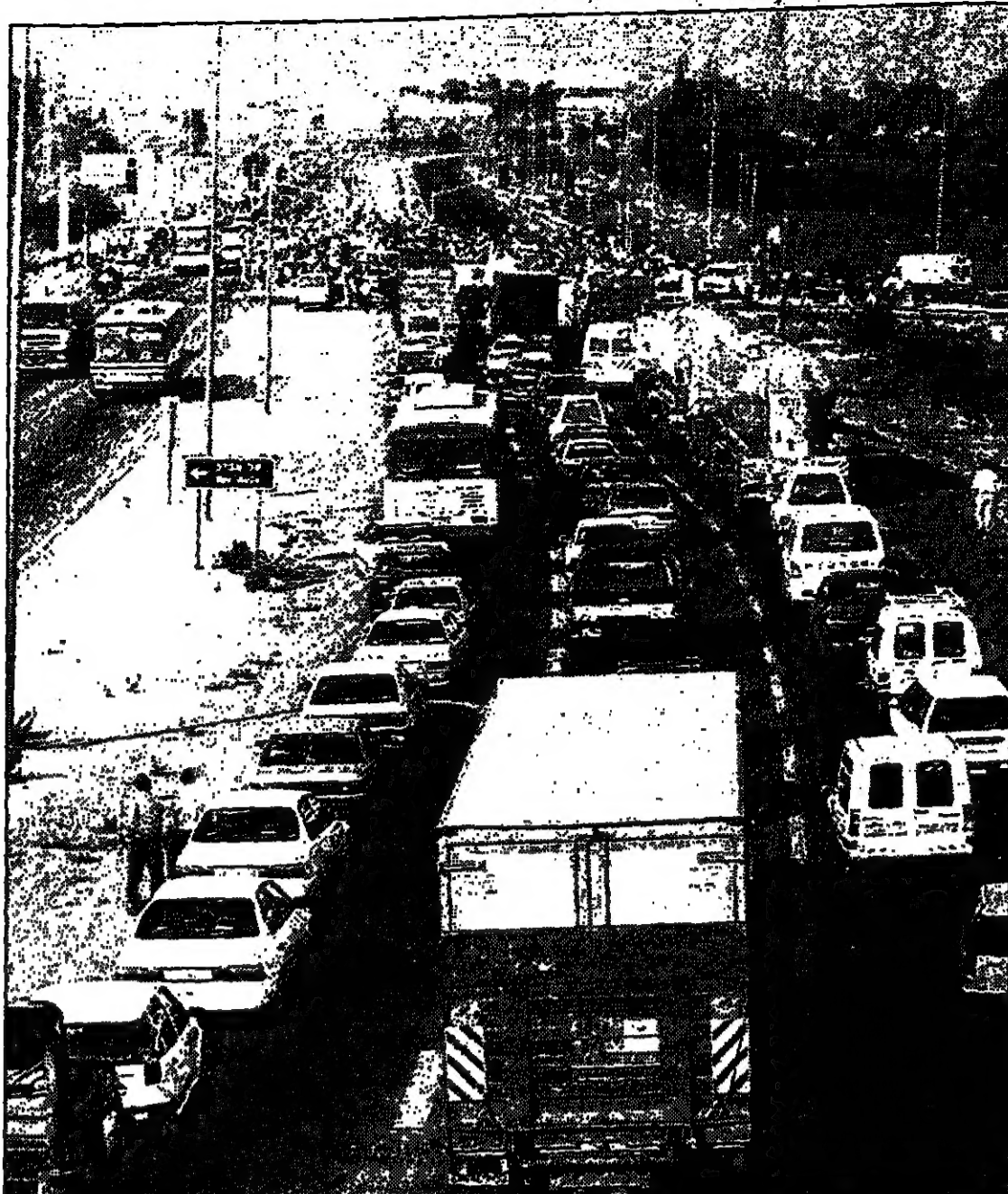
workers blocked the Lehavim intersection for more than an hour, and other buses blocked the Kastina and Ashdod intersections.

In Tel Aviv, about 70 workers from the Nazareth plant that manufactures the Sufa jeep, blocked Rehov Kaplan opposite the Defense Ministry to protest ministry plans to reduce jeep orders and to cut production in half beginning in January. Factory executives said the cuts could mean 250 layoffs.

In Dimona, about 120 railroad employees continued their protests against planned layoffs for a third day.

Some blocked the road to Eilat briefly before heading police orders to leave.

Their sanctions also disrupted train service throughout the coun-



A convoy of IAI workers chokes up a road near Ben-Gurion Airport yesterday after an angry meeting was held to protest plans to shut some plants and sell industry land. (Yael Sorech/Israel Sun)

try. MK Pini Badash (Tsomet) appealed to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to intervene and prevent workers from being fired in an area already plagued by unemployment.

In other labor disputes:

• The Teachers' Union declared a suspension of sanctions yesterday, in answer to a Finance Ministry appeal to open "intense negotiations," over wage demands

and work conditions. Avraham Ben-Shabbat, the union's secretary-general, said.

• City workers in Netanya ended a two-day strike after the city agreed not to cut wages, pending a ruling next Tuesday by the National Labor Court.

• The Tel Aviv Labor Court ordered sanitation workers yesterday to end a strike which they had called in protest against the city's hiring of private contractors to

help in garbage disposal.

A labor dispute that had threatened to close the Technion in Haifa was resolved yesterday after marathon negotiations among management, the Histadrut and workers' representatives.

Workers agreed to a recovery program in exchange for a guaranteed pension.

In addition, 35 employees are retiring early and 25 more may follow suit.

Tel Aviv to be main focus of Partition Day celebrations tomorrow

The 50th anniversary of the UN decision which led to the establishment of the State of Israel will be marked by a series of events tomorrow, including a major gathering at the site in Tel Aviv where thousands awaited the decision in 1947.

The main event will take place at 8:15 p.m. tomorrow night, at the area where Allenby, Shelukin, Nahalat Binyamin and King George streets come together in Tel Aviv.

Among those scheduled to appear at the event are Tuvia

Tzafir, Eli Yatzpan, Moshe Ivgy and Tea Packs.

Rehov Allenby will be closed tomorrow from the intersection of Bialik and Geula streets until the Gruzenberg-Mazeh streets from 2 p.m.

Cars parked in the area will be towed to the Carmelit parking area. Dan buses will travel alternate routes.

Tel Aviv Mayor Ronni Milo invited the ambassadors of the 33 countries who voted in favor of the creation of the state to a gathering at 6:30 tomorrow night at

Independence Hall, located at 16 Sderot Rothschild, the spot where David Ben-Gurion declared the establishment of the state.

The Israel Philharmonic Orchestra will hold a festive concert in the Mann Auditorium to mark the event.

The Batsheva Dance Company will put on a special performance, while the Cameri Theater will also mount the play "Family Story" dealing with a family which escaped Germany to build a new life in Palestine.

The Geshet Theater will also mark the day by putting on the play "Kfar."

The Eretz Yisrael Museum will hold a discussion day with the participation of underground fighters, academics and government representatives.

The Yediot Ahsaronot publishing company is publishing a new book called *Sheleg Levanon* featuring poetry produced by those who frequented Tel Aviv cafes, which commemorates the contributions made to Israeli culture and society by the cafes' customers. *(Tim)*

'Safe sex' rules ignored by most Israeli adults

By JUDY SEGEL

Most Israeli adults don't follow the rules of "safe sex" by using a condom with a new partner, according to a survey conducted shortly before World AIDS Day, which will be marked here and abroad on Monday.

The survey, conducted by the Israel representative of condom manufacturer Durex, found that 85% of Israelis who have sex with new partners don't use a condom. Of those who did, only 15% used it out of fear of contracting a sexually transmitted disease, including AIDS, with most of the rest concerned about an unwanted pregnancy.

Awareness among women was very low; just 8% who had a new partner insisted on a condom, compared to 22% of the men polled. But among young people aged 18 to 24, awareness that condoms can protect against sexually transmitted diseases was higher, 27% compared to only 13% of those aged 25 to 34 and 8% of those aged 35 to 44. Condoms are most frequently used by regular sexual partners, but the reason was given was fear of pregnancy rather than of an infectious disease.

According to the latest Health Ministry statistics, a total of 467 Israelis have contracted full-blown AIDS since 1981, and 89 of them are still alive and in Israel. There have also been 1,646 reported carriers - 1,548 of them alive - but actual numbers are estimated to be twice that or more. The number of reported intravenous drug users who have AIDS or are carriers is gradually decreasing, but the ministry says this may be due to reluctance among addicts to disclose that they take drugs.

Meanwhile, even though new cases of AIDS are declining in the US and Western Europe, the AIDS pandemic is spreading throughout the rest of the world much faster than previously believed, according to new numbers from the UN and the World Health Organization. It is estimated that 16,000 people are infected by the virus every day - nearly double the previous estimate of 8,500. More than 30 million people around the world are carriers or have AIDS, and 2.3 million people died of the disease this year. UN officials said that the rates of HIV transmission in sub-Saharan Africa have been grossly underestimated.

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Monday Dec. 15 "IN DEPTH" IN HAIFA
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Tour guides: Lior Shorer

Sunday Dec. 21 DISCOVER THE GREEN LINE
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CORRECTION

Please note the following clarifications regarding the article on "Seniors and the Law" in our recent Golden Age Supplement:

Senior discounts no longer include TV license fee.
Cable TV discounts may be limited to installation cost.
Municipal tax rates (amona) are reduced for seniors, only if they are recipients of old age benefits.
Free home nursing care is up to 16 (not 26) hours.

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UN ignores partition vote jubilee

Tomorrow's 50th anniversary of the historic vote to partition Palestine is going unnoticed at the UN, although the organization will mark the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People on Monday.

"There's no special focus" for the November 29, 1947, partition vote, said Maria Almeida, chief of the UN's "Palestine and Decolonization Unit."

She explained this was because "earlier this year, we commemorated 30 years of Israeli occupation."

At a General Assembly debate in July on the housing project at Har Homa, the PLO's UN observer, Nasser Kidwa, scoffed at the anniversary of Resolution 181, which called for a two-state solution in Mandatory Palestine. "This is 50 years of exile," he said.

Solidarity Day is held each year under the terms of a 1977 General Assembly resolution. It will include a "solemn meeting" of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, a series of films, and a cultural exhibit called "At Home in Palestine."

Marilyn Henry

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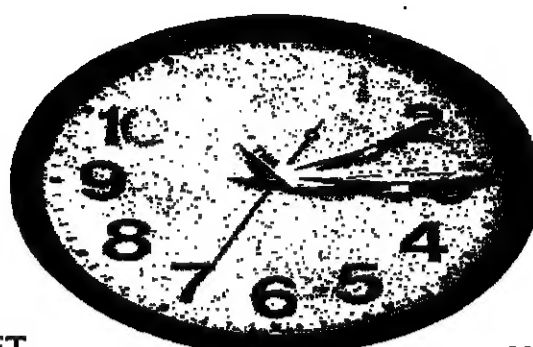
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T R A N S W O R L D A I R L I N E S

That other Mandela

South Africans this week have been lapping up the scandals of two famous divorcees in their midst — Earl Spencer and Winnie Madikizela-Mandela. The law there actually forbids the media from reporting details of divorce proceedings, so the acrimonious tussle between Princess Diana's brother and his former wife, ex-model Victoria Lockwood, has prompted a third story. That is the acrimonious tussle between Spencer and the media, after he sought a court injunction to gag two newspapers.

A law against reporting divorce wrangles, essentially a private matter, is a reasonable one, if it gets a bit fuzzy when the people involved are in the public eye.

In any case, whatever accusations are hurled back and forth across a divorce court, the story amounts to no more than tabloid titillation and juicy gossip.

There is nothing titillating about the Winnie Madikizela-Mandela story. (I shall refer to her as Winnie from here, only for simplicity.)

There is no gag on the reporting of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the unfolding saga of Winnie — although the reader might gag on the sordid details.

Unpopular

First, let us be clear why Winnie's brutality against her own supporters is so shocking. While right-wing whites in South Africa are using the case to excuse to some degree "the bad on both sides" in the apartheid era — that is not an issue.

The issue is that a woman who was a populist and popular leader in her own right, while her famous husband was in jail for his beliefs, was not only a sadistic tyrant, but remains an unrepentant one.

Her more fiery brand of African nationalism attracted young people to her banner more readily than to those of the more square and intellectual leaders of the African National Congress.

It is those very youth — the idealistic future of independent South Africa — that she abused — forever equating the freedom struggle in their minds with brutality.

The white leaders of apartheid were what they were — brutal and racist thugs. The name Mandela was supposed to represent the future, freedom, a different way. The evidence against Winnie mounted to irrefutable levels this week when one of the four young men kidnapped from a church by her "Mandela United Football Club" testified that she and her hooligans held Soweto under a reign of terror during the 1980s — as if the youngsters of that unfortunate place did not have enough terror to deal with under apartheid.

Mummy dearest

Thabiso Mono was kidnapped in December 1988. He told the commission, chaired by Nobel

Peace laureate Desmond Tutu, that Winnie first accused all four of having sex with a priest and then led the brutal physical assault on them which was finished off by the beatings, torture and whippings of the football club gang.

One of the four was Stompie Seipei, the 14-year-old whose brutal murder first

unmasked Winnie to horrified black activists. "We called her mummy then," said Mono. "She screamed at me that I was not fit to be alive. She started beating us. Then the whole group joined in. Winnie Mandela at first beat us with her fists and the rest lifted us up and dropped us on the ground. We started screaming and they

started singing." Winnie was convicted in 1992 of the kidnapping that ended in Stompie's death.

She got a six-year prison sentence which was converted to a fine on appeal. The leader of Mandela United, Jerry Richardson, took the rap for the murder and was jailed. When her sentence was overturned,

Winnie was greeted as a heroine by cheering crowds of young people. Winnie has refused to ask the Truth Commission for forgiveness — quite the contrary, she expected her appearance there to vindicate her and raise her popularity.

She is seeking election as deputy president of the ANC, no less, at its Congress in December. It is worth pausing to note with a shudder that the ANC is now the government of South Africa.

Not so trying

The Truth Commission has the power to grant Winnie an amnesty for her crimes of the apartheid era and it is all the more puzzling why she defiantly refuses to ask for it and make a fresh start.

She has accused the commission of being too lenient on the white criminals of the era and declines to accept its leniency herself. Of course, most of those white officials who have appeared before the commission are finished with public life. For them, the exercise is wiping the slate clean and removing the threat of prosecution. Many have admitted it served as a confessional where they asked for their sins to be forgiven, and from which they were able to walk out in some peace with themselves.

Winnie, now 61, still has political ambitions, the ANC is in power, in every country there is a certain indulgence for former freedom fighters when history moves on. So she would appear to have a lot to gain from humbling herself before her peers to admit responsibility, and maybe make some stirring speech about the trying times now past and the mistakes made by all sides.

Not Winnie. For her they were not trying times. They were the good old days.

Column One also appears on Tuesday and Wednesday.

Column One



Thomas O'Dwyer

'1997 warmest year since 1860'

LONDON — Global temperatures are rising, and 1997 is likely to be Earth's warmest year since records began in 1860, the British Broadcasting Corp. reported yesterday.

Britain's Meteorological Office said the planet's average surface temperature this year will be 0.5 of a degree centigrade higher than the average for 1960 to 1990. A spokesman said the temperature rise is cause for "great concern."

The report was released ahead of next week's weather talks in Kyoto, Japan. The US, in 10 days of talks starting on Monday will try to lead other nations down a path that it says will stave off threats of global warming without causing economic hardship.

Negotiators from some 160 countries are to meet in Kyoto to try to craft a plan to cut emissions from burning fuels that scientists say are changing the world's climate.

The Clinton administration has mapped a course to stabilize emissions from industrialized countries at 1990 levels over the next 15 years, using a system of credits and incentives to lower industries' costs of curbing pollution and substituting new energy sources for oil and coal.

"The proposed target is both responsible and ambitious. It represents a cut of some 30 percent of what emissions otherwise would have been" from this country in the

next 15 years, Undersecretary of State Stuart Eizenstat, the top US representative to the talks, said in a telephone briefing this week.

To get a deal, however, many experts believe the US — which is by far the biggest per capita polluter — will have to move a step closer to the European Union's position calling for steeper emissions reductions.

Many also feel that Vice President Al Gore, the leading US voice on climate change dangers, must go to Kyoto to show that the US is serious about getting a deal.

The White House has not decided whether Gore will make the politically perilous journey to Kyoto where he will be caught between two core supporters — environmentalists and labor.

Green groups want the Clinton administration to call for bigger cuts in emissions to better fight climate changes that scientists say could have calamitous effects on the world's weather, agriculture and ecosystems.

But labor and industry groups say a treaty would push up energy prices, hammer industries and force jobs overseas to countries not bound by the deal.

"It's impossible for this to go forward without devastating our economy," Cecil Roberts, president of the United Mine Workers of America, said this week at a

briefing. "Those other countries have gone to the table, not interested in improving the environment, but in getting the upper hand in the economy."

US industry and labor groups want nations to delay a binding deal while more study is done on whether global warming is in fact occurring. They also insist that rapidly developing countries such as China and Mexico must agree to reduce their emissions under an accord that binds industrialized countries.

The US is, in fact, insisting that developing countries — responsible for a small but quickly growing share of emissions — have "meaningful participation" in the Kyoto agreement.

In a non-binding resolution, the US Senate is on record that it would not ratify a treaty unless it forced developing countries to curb emissions.

But developing countries have balked, saying they are not responsible for the build-up of gases in the atmosphere and have not yet enjoyed the fruits of industrialization.

Environmentalists, however, contend that delay would only raise costs of curbing emissions and increase risks that global warming would grow completely out of mankind's control.

"If we have to start over then the fossil fuel industry has won. I think it's essential

to talk about the urgency of getting an agreement," Kelly Sims, of Ozone Action, said.

"I think it's going to end up with a deal between the US and the EU that gets a small reduction in first budget period (before 2010) in return for flexibility the US wants," Alden Meyer, of the Union of Concerned Scientists, said.

President Clinton is pushing for industrialized countries to stabilize emissions at 1990 levels by 2012, and wants an international system of trading emissions credits to let industries find the lowest-cost ways to meet the targets.

The European Union wants industrialized countries to agree to 15 percent reductions below their 1990 levels by 2010, and says the US plan for emissions trading would allow too many loopholes for countries to escape real reductions.

But US negotiator Eizenstat said once the details were sorted out, the plans really were not very far apart in the actual emissions reductions they would achieve.

For example, he said, the EU plan just calls for lowering carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide gases that are released when fuels are burned, while the US plan also includes three other industrial byproduct gases that are potent heat-trappers in small amounts.

(News agencies)

Afghans, UN launch \$250m. anti-drug plan

By KATHY GANNON

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan (AP) — Afghanistan's Taliban religious army struck a multi-million dollar deal with the United Nations to wipe out poppy production in its war-ravaged country, officials said yesterday.

The task is an enormous one that will take at least 10 years and cost \$250 million, said Pino Arlacchi, executive director of the UN International Drug Control Program, the man who struck the deal with the Taliban.

Together Afghanistan and Burma produce 90 percent of the world's supply of opium, the raw material used to produce heroin, he said.

Arlacchi spent several days at the headquarters of the Taliban religious militia in Afghanistan's southern Kandahar province negotiating the agreement.

But, the road ahead is long and

there are no guarantees of success, Arlacchi told a news conference in Islamabad.

In the next one year the Taliban has promised to wipe out all poppy production in Kandahar province, which produces 7.5% of the estimated 2,500 tons of opium produced annually in Afghanistan.

"It's a pilot project," Arlacchi said. "If in one year Kandahar is poppy-free we continue. If it's not we stop."

For its part in the agreement, the UN has promised to spend \$3.8 million to rebuild an infrastructure devastated by nearly 20 years of war.

One of the big job creation projects is the reopening of a large wool factory which could employ thousands of people, including women, he said.

The Taliban has banned women from working in areas under their control, and has shut girls' schools.

3 die in anti-Serb riots

PRISTINA, Yugoslavia (AP) — Ethnic Albanians seeking independence attacked a police station in Serbia's restive Kosovo province, killing a Serb policeman and leaving one assailant dead yesterday.

The attack began Wednesday night in Reznice, a village 100 kilometers west of the province's capital of Pristina, the official Tanjug news agency reported.

Three people were reported wounded — two policemen and an Albanian. The policemen were taken to a hospital but the wounded Albanian assailant was still on the run, the radio and other sources said.

Police sealed off the village, blocking roads in the vicinity, the Belgrade-based Beta news agency reported.

Ethnic unrest has increased in Kosovo in the past year and a half, raising fears that Serbia's southern province could explode in an armed conflict.

An ethnic Albanian teacher also died yesterday, one day after Serb police sealed off the village of Vojnik, just northwest of Pristina.

Four Serb policemen were also injured during the siege, a hospital source told Beta news agency.

The main Albanian political organization, the Democratic League of Kosovo, charged that police had fired a grenade at a school in Vojnik, fatally injuring the teacher, and wounding a second teacher and an 11-year-old boy.

Hours later Wednesday, a Serbian police chief was kidnapped in Obilic, just west of Pristina, Serb sources said. Three men in civilian clothes surrounded Bozo Spasic, 46, in Obilic, just west of the region's capital of Pristina, said the sources.

The men then beat the police chief on the head with guns and bundled him into a car. He was released this morning.

Tanjung said Spasic had been kidnapped by mistake and that assailants had been after a man who owed them a large sum of money. The policeman killed Friday was the first to die this year in unrest in Kosovo. Last year, 18 people were killed: four policemen, five Serb civilians and nine ethnic Albanians.

Bush fires hit east Australia

SYDNEY (Reuters) — Over 200 bushfires were burning on Australia's eastern seaboard yesterday and emergency services feared more would flare as lightning storms lit drought-hit scrubland.

Firefighters used helicopters to drop water on one major blaze in the Blue Mountains 50 kilometers west of Sydney as temperatures in some areas of New South Wales and Victoria states reached 40 degrees Celsius.



Rest in peace

The casket holding the body of Australian rock singer Michael Hutchence is carried inside St. Andrews Cathedral during the funeral service yesterday in Sydney. Hutchence hanged himself in his hotel room this Saturday.

(AP)

Earl Spencer offers wife 4m. rand divorce settlement

By ANTON FERREIRA

CAPE TOWN (Reuters) — Britain's Earl Spencer, brother of the late Princess of Wales, has offered his wife Victoria a divorce settlement of more than four million rand (NIS 2.89m.) in addition to monthly maintenance payments, his spokeswoman said yesterday.

Shelly-Ann Claircourt gave details of the offer to reporters in Cape Town, where Charles Spencer and his wife are fighting a legal battle over where financial details of the divorce should be adjudicated. Lady Spencer wants a ruling in Britain while the earl prefers South Africa.

Separately, the Cape Times newspaper said Earl Spencer had withdrawn a court attempt to bar it and its sister paper the Cape Argus from publishing details of the hearings.

"The withdrawal of Spencer's application for an interdict is a great victory for press freedom," Cape Times editor Ryland Fisher told reporters.

Earl Spencer issued a statement saying he had backed down because the newspapers had

planned to take the case all the way to the country's highest court. "I am not prepared for it to become a constitutional football," Spencer said, appealing to the media to minimize the impact of its reporting on his children.

Claircourt said the earl had formally presented the settlement offer to his estranged wife on Sunday night, the eve of the legal proceedings, and it formed part of the court record.

"He is offering Victoria 2.4 million rand in cash and a house worth approximately two million rand," she said.

In addition the earl would give her a car and pay 20,000 rand a month in maintenance until Lady Spencer died or remarried, Claircourt said.

She said Charles Spencer had undertaken to allow an English court to reassess the maintenance and provide for Victoria's housing needs if and when she returned to Britain from her home in Cape Town.

The earl would in addition meet all the costs involved in bringing up their children, aged between three and six.

The earl, 33, and countess, 32, live in separate homes in Constantia, one of Cape Town's most affluent suburbs. They moved there in 1995, ostensibly to escape press harassment.

Lady Spencer is seeking a lump sum of 3.75 million pounds (NIS 22m.) and 5,000 pounds a year for each of the children, two of whom are twins, according to court papers.

Claircourt said the countess appeared to have been "underwhelmed" by her husband's offer. She quoted Earl Spencer's lawyer Leslie Weinkove as saying it represented unprecedented generosity, considering the marriage had lasted only five years.

Lawyers for the countess have said she will seek to show that the marriage was short-lived because of the behavior of her husband, who they have accused of "serial adultery" and being a bully.

They said they might present evidence that the earl's conduct contributed to the ill-health of Lady Spencer, who is receiving therapy for an eating disorder.

The hearing adjourned yesterday and will continue on Monday.

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The unveiling will take place at Har Hamenuhot at 4 p.m.



Canine cop
A German shepherd sniffs at a police jeep to detect explosive material during a demonstration yesterday at the Roumieh Prison outside Beirut. The dog is one of 11 to join Lebanon's police force to detect both explosives and narcotics. (AP)

Experts: Public support for US shaky among Gulf allies

By BARRY MAY

DUBAI (Reuters) - The United States may have enough weapons in the Gulf to strike Iraq but it cannot count on public support from its Gulf Arab allies, analysts said yesterday.

Planes aboard two US aircraft carriers rushed to the Gulf would have to bear the brunt of any action, they said.

Saudi Arabia, Washington's main Arab ally in the region and launchpad for the 1991 Gulf War that drove Iraqi occupation forces from Kuwait, would be reluctant to allow another raid from its soil, analysts said.

King Fahd on Monday expressed extreme satisfaction with the peaceful settlement of the latest standoff between Iraq and the United Nations over American arms inspectors.

Most US air force units in the Gulf - about 5,000 personnel and scores of planes - are stationed at the Prince Sultan air base south of Riyadh, from where they police a "no-fly zone" that keeps Iraqi aircraft out of southern Iraq.

Two US-piloted U-2 spy planes, which Iraq has threatened to shoot down on UN surveillance missions checking Iraqi arms movements,

are dispersed further afield at a Saudi base near the Red Sea, according to Western military sources.

The US last week drafted a second carrier into the Gulf, boosting its naval air power to 100 combat aircraft and 50 other planes.

It has also advanced six Stealth fighters to the frontline state of Kuwait and 30 fighters and two B-1 bombers to Bahrain.

Six B-52 bombers were sent to Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean.

The commander of US forces in the region said on Wednesday he was confident Gulf states would support "serious" military action against Iraq.

"I do feel strongly we will get the support we need when the time comes," Marine Corps General Anthony Zinni told reporters at the Pentagon after a tour in which he met Gulf Arab leaders.

But Gulf analysts said the tide of public opinion about Iraq had turned and Arab leaders could not afford to be seen supporting armed action against the rulers of Baghdad.

"Behind the scenes, policymakers in Washington and London are being told by Arab leaders: 'If you are going to do something, fine as long as it is decisive. But do not

expect us to publicly support you because that would not play well at all in the current atmosphere,'" said one analyst who declined to be named.

Even the hint of private support is wearing thin, however.

The Gulf's elder statesman, President Sheikh Zaid bin Sultan al-Nahayan of the United Arab Emirates, on Tuesday said Iraqi President Saddam Hussein should be forgiven his mistakes and welcomed back into the Arab fold.

There is real anger in Arab states at the treatment of the region by the United States and its Western allies, the analyst said. That anger has been reflected in stridently anti-American editorials in government-controlled Gulf newspapers.

Rosemary Holis, head of the Middle East program at the London-based Royal Institute of International Affairs, is one who sees no support among Gulf Arab leaders for use of their territory against Saddam.

"It is more than just disinclination, it is positively dangerous," said Holis, who recently visited the region. "To the Gulf Arabs, the US way of posing the issue, framing the argument, curdling the debate and winding up the rhetoric is positively oppressive."

"And it just doesn't make any sense if you live in the region and you are of the region - you don't see things that way, but you can't get your voice heard."

Analysts said that without use of the US air force bombers and fighters based in Saudi Arabia, any raid would have to be from the two carriers. But this could not repeat the kind of mass bombing campaign undertaken during the war.

"It is doubtful whether a bombing raid could eliminate Saddam or Iraqi weapons of mass destruction. So they [the Americans] are hemmed into a tight spot," one Western analyst said.

What next? "I think we've probably got a series of confrontations and crises coming, and this suits the Iraqi government down to the ground because they like to be the center of play and they can clearly conclude that there are differences of opinion," said Holis.

"I do think it is possible that the Americans will use force but I don't think it will solve very much," he said. "It remains the case that the Americans would like an alternative to Saddam Hussein, but killing him doesn't necessarily produce a conducive change of government. More sober heads in Washington are aware of this."

Judge: Papon trial to resume next week

BORDEAUX, France (AP) - The war crimes trial of Maurice Papon will resume December 4, a French judge ruled yesterday after a court-appointed medical expert determined that the defendant would be well enough to return to the courtroom in a week.

Judge Jean-Louis Castagnede scheduled the resumption of the

trial based on findings of Dr. Rene Pariente, a leading lung expert who diagnosed the 87-year-old Papon as suffering from a chronic bronchial infection that had spread to both lungs.

Papon's lawyer, Jean-Marc Varaut, had requested a postponement through December 9 to give his client additional time to recover. Papon has been hospital-

ized since November 17 at the Haut-Leveque cardiology facility outside Bordeaux.

Papon, a police supervisor in the Gironde region between 1942-44, is accused of ordering the arrests of 1,690 Jews, including 223 children, who were deported to Nazi concentration camps. Most died at Auschwitz. He is the highest-ranking offi-

cial of the pro-Nazi Vichy regime to stand trial for crimes against humanity.

The trial has been repeatedly delayed by Papon's health problems.

Originally to last three months when it began in early October, the proceedings are now expected to last through at least February.

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A second chance

The Cold War had not yet risen upon the world stage in full force, helping give President Harry Truman the room he needed to overrule the State Department and the Pentagon. Joseph Stalin had not yet entered his intensely antisemitic phase. Historian Paul Johnson wrote of the United Nations vote on the partition of Palestine, "If British evacuation had been postponed another year, the United States would have been far less anxious to see Israel created and Russia would almost certainly have been hostile.... Israel slipped into existence through a fortuitous window in history which briefly opened for a few months in 1947-48. That too was luck, or providence."

The UN vote was cast on a Saturday, 50 years ago tomorrow. The peoples of Palestine listened over the radio as the votes were cast: 33 for, 13 against, 10 abstentions. The streets of Tel Aviv burst into celebration, yet the viability of the Jewish state envisioned by the plan was in considerable question. Looking back from today's vantage point, the fact that the plan was celebrated by Jews and excoriated by Arabs is ironic, given that it would have created what we now would call a Palestinian state.

Fifty years later, partition is once again the order of the day. Though Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu continues to insist that a Palestinian state is unacceptable, right-wing icon Ariel Sharon has publicly said that such a state is inevitable. And Likud coalition head Meir Sheerit has declared that it would be better if a Palestinian state were to be created while the Likud is in power, than under a Labor government.

In fact, if Netanyahu's remarks since taking office are dissected, there is little real difference between what he is saying and the more candid comments of Sharon and Sheerit. Netanyahu has long ago dropped most of the historic Israeli arguments against a state: that there already are 21 Arab states, that Jordan is Palestine (which King Hussein argued as late as 1984), and that it is absurd to create a second Arab state in what was Mandatory Palestine.

Netanyahu, and the Right generally, no longer argues with the principle of what Yitzhak Rabin called "separation," and what could equally be called "partition." Rather, the prime minister argues that such a partition must not result in the Palestinians obtaining a small but important subset of sovereign attributes: unlimited rights to create an army, import weaponry, and forge military alliances with countries like Iraq and Iran.

It seems that if such security concerns — which are shared by Labor Party leader Ehud Barak and by the vast majority of Israelis — were to be addressed, Netanyahu would be left with little

ground for objecting to a Palestinian state.

In fact, it is already being argued that the Palestinians have a state in all but name. They have control over territory, an army (under the name "strong police force"), passports recognized by many countries, a flag, a government, a parliament, and a judicial system.

Not surprisingly, the Palestinians are acting as if the fact of statehood is not in question, only the limits of its sovereignty and territory. The starting point, therefore, of the final-status negotiations is one that would have been almost unthinkable from the Israeli viewpoint just a few years ago.

In this context, it is a mistake for the US to be continually acting as if Israel must prove its goodwill in the negotiations, while the Palestinians are free to largely ignore their commitments under the Hebron Accord. Israel has fulfilled all its commitments made to the US in the Note for the Record, while the Palestinians have fulfilled none of theirs.

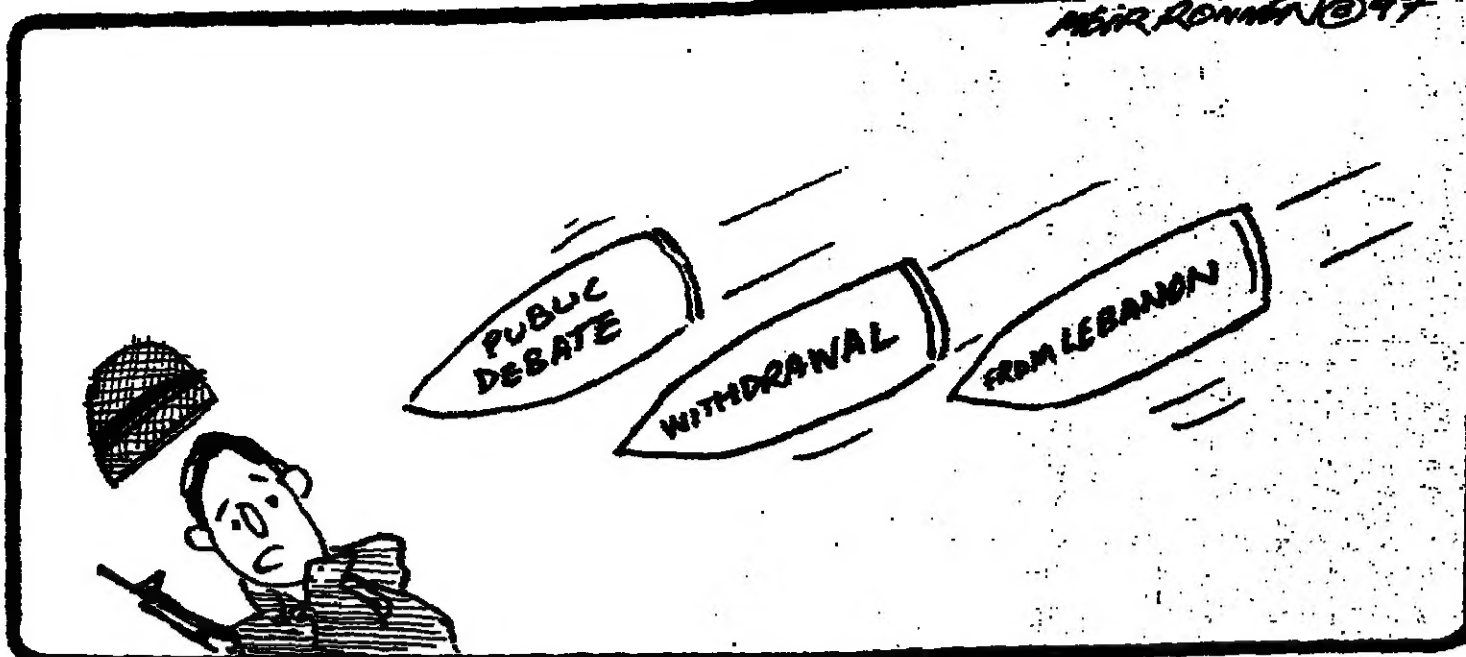
In the list of supposedly reciprocal commitments concluded in January, Israel said it would carry out the first redeployment, release women prisoners, and negotiate outstanding issues, such as the Gaza airport and sea port. The Palestinians committed to completing the revision of the PLO Covenant, "systematically" combating terrorist infrastructure, cutting back their police force to agreed-upon levels, confiscating illegal weapons, and other security related matters.

Yet it is Israel that is in the American doghouse, while the Palestinians find a sympathetic ear for demands that are not even in the agreement. The Clinton administration has been turning the screws on Netanyahu in an increasingly personal and nasty way. Until recently, the game of courting Israeli opposition figures while boycotting Netanyahu himself was only played by the Arab states. Clinton officials are reportedly admitting that his refusal to meet Netanyahu during his recent US visit — while he had plenty of time to receive an award from Shimon Peres and Leah Rabin — was a calculated snub.

This lopsided pressure on Netanyahu is a clear recipe for continued stalemate and conflict, since there is no reason for the Palestinians to accept Israeli proposals that the US seems prepared to brush off. The ironic result of this approach could be a further breakdown in the process, putting the final-status talks at risk before they have even begun.

Fifty years ago, the Arab world turned down a Palestinian state that was accepted by Israel. The pending final-status talks represent a second chance for the Palestinians; they should not blow it by demanding too much of Israel while not keeping their side of the bargain.

"Friendly fire"



Condition of partnership

Even the greatest of men are liable to err and David Ben-Gurion exercised that right massively when he uttered his explosive "oom shmoom" to indicate contempt for the United Nations. It was an unworthy statement when it was made and BG's devotees have made it worse by reiterating it endlessly. The truth is that no nation has ever benefited more than Israel from the existence, after World War II, of an international organization capable of filling the vacuum created by the withdrawal of British power.

The fidelity of the UN to Israeli sovereignty was enacted in several stages over the entire first year of Israeli nationhood.

One: On September 1, 1947 I was called to the Palais Des Nations at Geneva to receive the first copy of the conclusions reached by the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP). This body, composed of representatives of small and medium states, had voted by eight votes to three in favor of the partition of Palestine between a Jewish and an Arab state.

I realized that I had become the first human being to set eyes on an international document in which a Jewish state was positively recommended.

Two: On November 29, 1947, the UN General Assembly ratified the conclusions of UNSCOP by a two thirds majority. From that point on it was reasonable to describe Jewish statehood as part of the international consensus. It was a dramatic breakthrough for Zionism.

Three: On March 24, 1949 the UN Security Council voted by nine votes to one to support the admis-

sion of Israel to membership in the United Nations. Without the sanction of the major powers, including the United States and the Soviet Union, the November 29 Resolution would have had no juridical or political effect. Israeli diplomacy was now in the ascendant.

Four: On May 11, 1949 the General Assembly, overriding Arab objections by a wider margin than

These accords were honored in most of their provisions and Israel was free to open its gates to 680,000 Jewish kinsmen in the first three years of its existence as a state.

It is true that international recognition did not solve Israel's problems of defense and survival, but it is also true that the UN's most important capacity is its unchal-

Prime Minister Netanyahu's constant assertion of hostility to Palestinian statehood constitutes a major obstacle to regional peace

before, decided that Israel was a member of the UN which is dedicated to the "sovereign equality of all its members." The May 11 resolution was much more far-reaching in its consequences than all the previous UN enactments, since it created a juridical and political reality which no subsequent defection has been able to undermine. The way was now open for my delegation to secure Israel's entry into all the functional agencies such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the World Health Organization and the other institutions that express planetary solidarity.

On the basis of Israel's membership in the United Nations, armistice agreements were signed in 1949 with Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria.

lenged right to define the international community by its admissions policies. More recently, the UN General Assembly endorsed the Oslo Accords in a joint resolution proposed by Israel and the PLO.

No historian has ever imagined a scenario in which Israel could have achieved sovereign recognition so rapidly without the existence of an international organization which became the decisive voice in Israel's emergence.

It is true that in later years it became a UN practice to denigrate Israel and even to describe its Zionist creed as "racism," but it is also true that in a solitary act of contrition the UN General Assembly annulled that resolution. None of the resolutions virulently hostile to Israel had any

binding legal status in UN terms. Israeli credentials at the UN were fully established at a time when China, Japan, Germany, Italy, the Baltic States and each of the former republics of the Soviet Union languished outside the main body of the international family.

In a recent series of speeches, former secretary of state Henry Kissinger expressed the view that the establishment of an Arab state in a part of the former "Palestine" would be an important element of the current peace process. When I presented my letters of credence to president Truman in September 1950 as ambassador to the United Nations and the United States, he said to me: "You got your state because your leaders made rational proposals and your adversaries did not."

By "your leaders," he meant Chaim Weizmann and Ben-Gurion (he had never met any other Jewish leader). By "rational proposals" he meant that the resolution of November 29, 1947 was not unbalanced: it provided for a Palestinian state side by side with Israel. There was no Likud input to the partition resolution.

In my successful plea for Israel's UN admission on May 5, 1949, I said that "at every stage of Israel's relations with the Arab world, we have found equality of status to be the essential condition of partnership." In these conditions, Prime Minister Netanyahu's constant assertion of hostility to Palestinian statehood, sets him apart from a growing Israeli consensus and constitutes a major obstacle to regional peace.

The writer is a former foreign minister.

Outsiders at the top

A few days ago, we received a letter from Dr. V.O. of Lagos, Nigeria.

Dr. O., who claims to represent some top officials of the Federal Government Contract Review Panel, wants to use funds trapped in the Central Bank of Nigeria to finance an import business. But because they are civil servants and members of the panel, he and his friends can't act in their own names.

So Dr. O. is seeking the help of an overseas partner, and he proposes to transfer to us \$26,400,000, of which we will get to keep 20%. All he asks is that we send by fax — not by mail, since he has no address — our bank name, address, fax number and account number.

The envelope bore a very pretty stamp, which I gave to my son. After that, my first instinct was to throw the letter into the rubbish bin. But on further reflection, I decided to save it. Perhaps I can sell it to someone on the Bibi, King of Israel Committee.

The more time that passes, the more Benjamin Netanyahu comes to resemble that other great purveyor of secure peace — "the people" — Richard Nixon.

Nixon and Netanyahu were both outsiders who pushed their way to the top through sheer force of will.

The more time that passes, the more Netanyahu comes to resemble that other great purveyor of secure peace — Richard Nixon

a direct line to the people's real wants and needs and that this justified dancing at the very edge of the rules of the democratic game.

Both blamed their troubles on vindictive media and a disloyal opposition, and both tried to distract public discontent and mobilize support by endlessly repeating mindless mantras aimed at the heart, but not the mind (Nixon — "national security," "traditional American values"; Netanyahu — "united Jerusalem," "war against terror," "Jewish tradition"). And

in American history, he had to resign and sink off home, leaving behind a country mired in self-doubt and malaise from which it would not recover for at least half a decade. For Netanyahu, the jury is still out.

FROM his perspective, the prospects are not entirely reassuring. Bibi is heading for a serious confrontation with the United States that can only be avoided at the cost of a serious confrontation with his own Knesset coalition. He

has lost the confidence of several senior Likud personalities, and other coalition allies are liable to give him a very hard time in the budget debate. And the polls, for what they are worth, are not encouraging.

Nevertheless, Netanyahu is not only a survivor but also a formidable political tactician. The Likud revolt has fizzled because the rebels can't agree on a common strategy, much less a common candidate. And the waverers, perhaps frightened by their own audacity, have seized on the establishment of a commission of inquiry into the proceedings of the party convention and on Avigdor Lieberman's resignation as excuses to try to crawl back into Netanyahu's good graces.

Yossi Sarid has compared this latter group to rats climbing back onto a sinking ship, but at least they don't have to worry about ending up like Saddam Hussein's sons-in-law, who also defected and then tried to change their minds.

In short, there is still a reasonable prospect that Bibi will serve out his first term, and maybe even a second one.

The writer is senior research associate at the Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies at Tel Aviv University.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

MACCABIAH FIASCO

Sir, — I refer to the distasteful behavior by the Israeli authorities regarding the Maccabiah-Yarkon River disaster. I am disgusted with this debacle. The five-month delay in reaching a verdict on the inquiry and compensating the victims is endemic in our national character.

The fiasco epitomizes insensitivity, indiscipline, incompetence and irresponsibility. I have consistently experienced all of these well-known traits in the short time I have been living here. In my

opinion it is a symbol of a degenerating society and indicative of a flawed political system that allows similar disasters and tragedies to be whitewashed with monotonous regularity.

Incumbent damage has already been done to Israel's name in Australia and Israel cannot afford to lose Australian Jewry's support. The Australian Jewish community should insist on quick justice and harsh penalties for the offending parties responsible for the deaths and wounding of their participants

at the Maccabiah Games.

It would be a lesson and a good example to the rest of Israeli society who condone corner cutting and irresponsible behavior, a situation endemic in Israel.

I certainly hope there is a change of attitude and this matter is resolved to the satisfaction of all my Australian Jewish friends, other interested parties and particularly the victim's families.

Jerusalem. JACK DAVIS

MARY'S HUSBAND

Sir, — The Ethiopian Orthodox Church in Jerusalem in general and Archbishop Mathewas in particular present their greetings and have the honor to criticize an article of the November 10 edition of *The Jerusalem Post*.

It was with deep sorrow that we read a statement under the headline "Rock on which Virgin Mary rested near Bethlehem" where it says "Mary and her husband Joseph..."

The Gospel according to St. Matthew, Chapter 1, No. 18 says, "Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost."

Therefore, it would be our religious obligation to correct your statement by relating the word husband with her future husband or the husband to be in order to avoid a

disinterest and to enable this one of the major Christian sites ever excavated in the country to be a prime attraction for masses of Christian pilgrims and visitors of all round the world.

GIRMA ADAMU
General Secretary of
The Ethiopian Orthodox T. Church in Jerusalem
Jerusalem.

FROM OUR ARCHIVES

On November 28, 1937, *The Palestine Post* reported that two boys and a girl were injured when a bomb was thrown on the road at the King George Avenue-Ben Yehuda street junction in Jerusalem. Another bomb was thrown from a passing car in the Simon the Just quarter, injuring one person.

Armed men attacked a military patrol near Nablus and the Sejera Police Post was subjected to heavy firing. The British Army continued searches in various Arab villages and many arrests were made.

Shots were fired at a bus carrying a number of Jewish passengers at Hadar Hacarmel in Haifa.

50 years ago: On November 28,

1947, *The Palestine Post* reported from Flushing Meadows the final preparations for the Palestine Partition plan vote.

Bidding Beersheba goodbye, Sir Alan Cunningham, the High Commissioner, reported that Britain would continue to be responsible for law and order in any area as long as they remained in control. A British Foreign Office spokesman announced in London that the Jordanian Arab Legion would withdraw from Palestine, together with all the British Forces.

A memorial to Dr. Ego Sereni, who had parachuted behind the German lines on a commando mission during World War II and was caught and murdered in Dachau,

was dedicated at Givat Brenner.

25 years ago: On November 28, 1972, *The Jerusalem Post* reported that Egyptian Prime Minister Aziz Sidki announced that Egypt was ready for war and had provided its army with all its needs.

The Foreign Ministry reiterated Foreign Minister Abba Eban's recent statements that it was up to the Soviet Union to take the initiative for the resumption of diplomatic relations with Israel.

Rome police announced that four attack cases crammed with arms and ammunition found abandoned at the airport were meant for an Arab terror bid.

Alexander Zvielli

AFTER 126 years of humiliation and scorn, of having her name dragged through the mud by both history books and cruel limericks, absolution has come, finally, for Mrs. O'Leary's celebrated cow.

Daisy, you see, was done wrong.

The Chicago City Council officially said as much with its resolution exonerating O'Leary and Daisy of touching off the Great Chicago Fire of 1871. The legendary conflagration burned down a third of the city, killed 300 people and left 100,000 homeless.

While she was never accused in court, folklore has long put the blame for the blaze on O'Leary, who was allegedly milking Daisy in the barn when the cow raised a hoof and knocked over a lantern on a dry, hot, windy Indian summer evening.

But historians have long doubted that version, and exhaustive research by Richard Bales, a local insurance lawyer-turned-amateur historian, points the finger at a one-legged horse-cart driver and near-do-well named Daniel "Peg Leg" Sullivan. It was Sullivan who started the fire in the O'Leary barn, the new research concluded, then covered his tracks by telling investigators he was standing in front of a neighbor's house when he saw the fire break out.

The purpose of the resolution was to redeem history's mistreatment of a hard-working Irish widow and her long-embattled cow.

In 1871, journalists, eager to sensationalize the events of the Great Fire, were quick to find in

Mrs. Kate O'Leary an easy scapegoat for the calamitous inferno. Bales said. As a working-class immigrant and a woman, Kate O'Leary was an easy target for those publications who always found it comfortable to vilify Irish Catholics who had not yet assimilated into the dominant American middle-class culture.

The tale of Mrs. O'Leary's cow is among America's first urban myths. It has endured and spread like, well, wildfire, precisely because it is such a tidy and compelling way to explain a mysterious catastrophe.

Bales spent two years combing through land records and official documents. With his company's access to land records from the time of the fire, Bales mapped the De Koven Street area where O'Leary lived, replicating every-

thing from barn doors to fences. He then combed Chicago Historical Society Archives and the 1,000-page official inquiry into the fire.

When he combined the map and the transcripts, he noticed Sullivan's testimony didn't pan out. At least one house and perhaps a high fence would have obstructed Sullivan's view. Other aspects of Sullivan's testimony proved highly doubtful.

Nancy Connolly, O'Leary's great-great-granddaughter, said the family always suspected O'Sullivan.

The story has always been somewhat of a family joke for her descendants, Connolly said. "We used to always say things like: 'You better turn that stove off. You don't want to start a fire,'" she said.

The 'credibility gap' cuts both ways

Israel and America face too many important issues to allow personality differences or emotions to determine policies. With the future boundaries of Israel and the possibility of Palestinian state in the balance, and the threats from Iraq and Iran in the background, the leaders of both states need to focus on the substance of the issues.

In 1990 and 1991, the intense personal dislike and emotional conflicts between the Baker-Bush team and Yitzhak Rabin did not serve the national interests of either the US or Israel. The lessons of that period should be clear both to Washington and Jerusalem.

Relations between the Netanyahu government and the Clinton administration have never been good. During the 1996 Israeli election campaign, Martin, Indyk, who served as US ambassador to Israel, and is now assistant secretary of state, encouraged Clinton to actively support Shimon Peres. Furthermore, American officials have invested a great deal of energy and prestige in the Rabin-Peres conception of the Oslo peace process, and it has always been difficult for them to accept its limitations.

For his part, Netanyahu has done little to change the sense of disappointment in Washington. A series of policy blunders, from the opening of the tunnel in Jerusalem's Old City to Har Homa have shifted the burden of the failure of the peace process to Israel.

Beginning with their first meetings, the prime minister never managed to convince the members of the Clinton administration that the Oslo framework has failed to bring peace to Israelis, and that a radical shift in concept is necessary.

Indeed, in renegotiating the Hebron withdrawal agreement, Netanyahu committed himself to the continuation of the Oslo process, which raised expectations in Washington. But months passed without a significant redeployment. Israel's rejection of the American proposal for a "time out" in settlement construction, increased the disappointment and anger.

In addition, Netanyahu's failure to establish effective leadership in the coalition government or even in his own Likud Party, combined with his unwillingness to accept the need for a more flexible system of selective military service—based on a framework of more explicit (and far more substantial) material incentives for personnel at all ranks and levels?

GERALD M. STEINBERG

the conflicts with American Jews have reinforced the negative images and made him appear vulnerable to pressure. Netanyahu is seen as unreliable and lacking in credibility.

American officials blame Netanyahu for the stalemate in the peace process, for the official Egyptian and Palestinian boycotts at the Doha economic summit, and for the cold response of the Arab states to Secretary of State Madeleine Albright's request for cooperation in dealing with continuing Iraqi threats. The truth is that in each of these cases, the Arab states would have taken the same positions, regardless of the Israeli government's policies, but Netanyahu is an effective scapegoat.

American expressions of sympathy after every terrorist bombing are no substitute for the security that Israel was promised

THE Israeli side has its own valid complaints, and the Americans have their own credibility problems. Like the Bush and Baker team, the Clinton team has consistently underestimated the security threats to Israel. American expressions of sympathy after every terrorist bombing are no substitute for the security that Israel was promised but has not received in the "peace" process. In addition, the US government has failed to fulfill its obligations to prevent the proliferation of missiles and weapons of mass destruction. Russia continues to provide Iran with the technology for such weapons, and six years after Israel agreed to act with restraint in the face of Iraqi missile attacks, the US has still not redeemed its pledge to permanently destroy Iraq's ability to attack Israel.

Given the power of the Americans and the overriding importance of the US-Israeli relationship, the US must recognize the importance Israel attaches to a strong and effective American role in preventing proliferation of missiles and weapons of mass destruction in Iran and Iraq. If the US expects Israel to act with restraint and avoid unilateral actions, then they must assume responsibility for removing these threats. By failing to block the Iranian acquisition of dangerous weapons, and by seeming to back down when Russia and France opposed action to destroy Iraqi biological weapons, the US has not provided the stable security environment in which Israel might be encouraged to take risks in the peace process. This issue is central for all Israelis, and is not dependent on the personality or ideology of the prime minister.

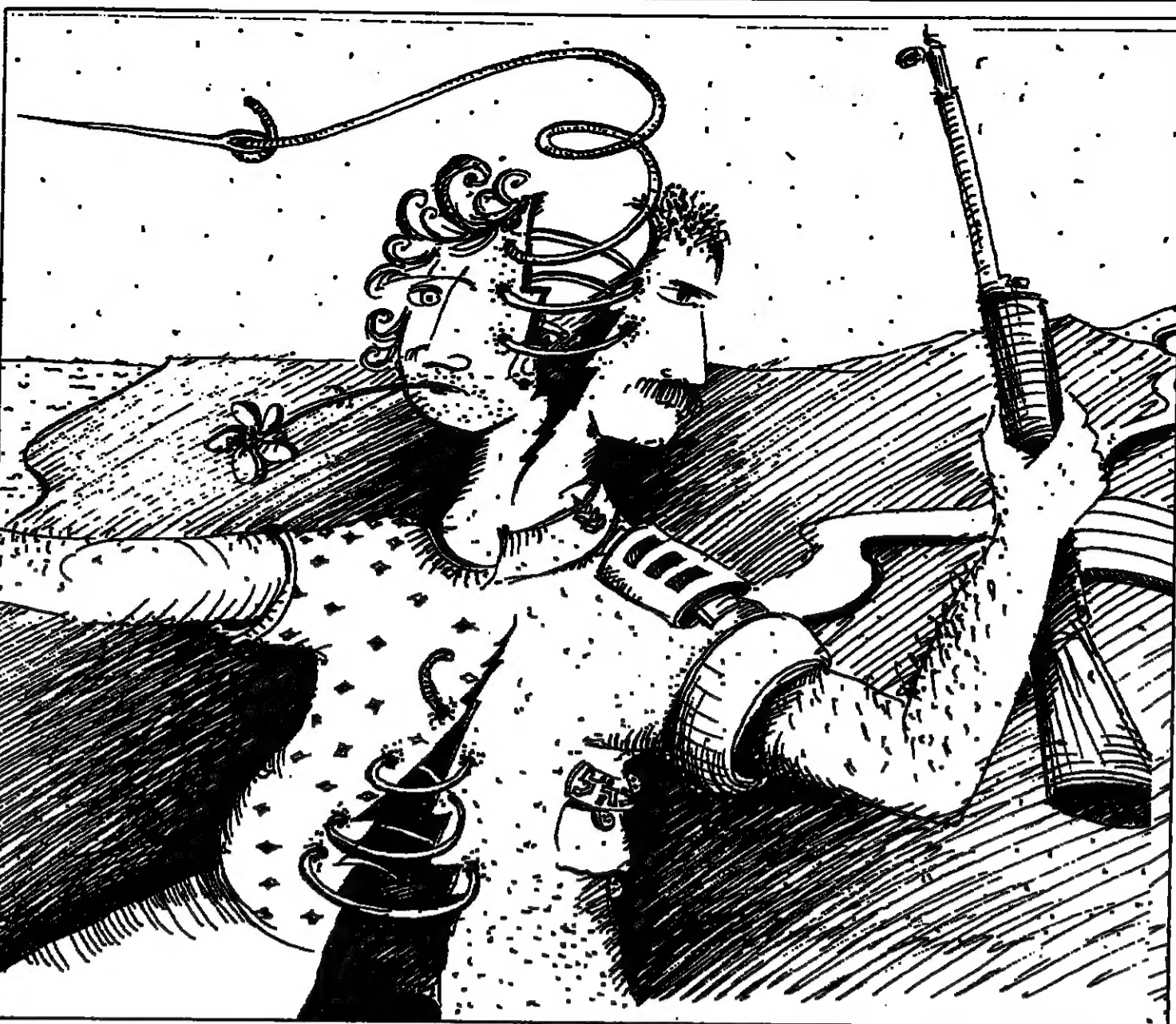
preventing Iraq and Iran from developing, or, in the case of Saddam Hussein, keeping weapons of mass destruction, it is in Israel's vital national interests to repair relations with Washington. Albeit belatedly, Netanyahu now seems to understand this fact. His latest efforts towards implementing another Israeli redeployment, despite opposition in the Likud and the coalition, are aimed primarily at repairing relations with the Clinton administration.

At the same time, the US government ought to undertake a thorough review of its policies with respect to the Palestinian-Israeli peace process and the many areas of instability in the region. Officials whose personal investment and emotional attachments do not allow for an objective appraisal and consideration of alternatives to the Oslo process should be transferred to responsibilities that do not involve the Middle East.

In addition, Clinton and his advisors must recognize the importance Israel attaches to a strong and effective American role in preventing proliferation of missiles and weapons of mass destruction in Iran and Iraq. If the US expects Israel to act with restraint and avoid unilateral actions, then they must assume responsibility for removing these threats. By failing to block the Iranian acquisition of dangerous weapons, and by seeming to back down when Russia and France opposed action to destroy Iraqi biological weapons, the US has not provided the stable security environment in which Israel might be encouraged to take risks in the peace process. This issue is central for all Israelis, and is not dependent on the personality or ideology of the prime minister.

In the face of these threats, the tensions in US-Israeli relations must be repaired quickly. Instead of angry words, demonstrations of pique, and quibbles over White House invitations, officials in Jerusalem and Washington need to restore the high level of policy coordination and consultation that serve the vital interests of both states.

The writer directs the Arms Control Project at the Begin Sadat Center for Strategic Studies, Bar Ilan University.



An army for the 1990s

STUART A. COHEN

Chief of Staff Amnon Lipkin-Shahak seems to be making a habit of complaining in public about the state of Israeli society. He first did so in October 1996, in a eulogy delivered on the first anniversary of Yitzhak Rabin's assassination, when he launched into what can only be described as an emotionally charged attack on the "hedonism" apparently prevalent amongst large segments of Israel's (Jewish) population.

He harped on a similar theme in May of this year, when he announced that the public was evincing signs of "war-weariness." And he has now returned to the charge. In an address given at Tel Aviv University's Dayan Center earlier this week, the IDF chief of staff once again berated Israeli society, this time for being "too soft" on draft-dodgers.

At the broadest level of analysis, Shahak's feeling that something fundamental has changed in Israel's domestic environment is of course correct. Our attitudes toward many of the values which once were considered axiomatic are indeed undergoing substantial shifts. Almost as a matter of course, relationships between Israeli citizens and their armed forces have been affected by that process.

Gone, it seems, are the days when the IDF could rely on near-universal domestic veneration. Instead, senior officers now find themselves fighting a rearguard action to maintain their individual and corporate status.

True, according to public opinion surveys, the IDF retains its position as the most respected of all Israeli national institutions. But considering the paucity of alternatives (the Knesset? individual political parties? the chief rabbi? the State Attorney's Office?) that isn't saying very much.

One doesn't have to be a professional sociologist or an informed military expert to notice the extent of the change. We can all compare the amount of critical scrutiny which the media focus on IDF operations with the atmosphere of awed deference which permeated most press references to the military just a couple of decades ago. We are all aware of the far more stringent

stance increasingly being adopted by the courts towards military conduct. We are all sensitive to the more intrusive attitude evinced by the contemporary generation of parents, who express increasingly vocal concern about both the conditions and the purposes of their children's military service.

Above all, and like Shahak himself, we have all had to sit up and take note of what the IDF Manpower Branch admits is an incremental decline in motivation to serve in combat units, amongst conscripts and reservists alike.

Shifts of that magnitude and extent in public opinion cannot be attributed to any single cause. Still less can responsibility for their occurrence be heaped on the shoulders of any single individual, no matter how exalted his or

from inspiring confidence in his qualities of leadership, the tone of his complaints about the condition of Israeli society in fact generates considerable concern. They suggest that their author is not only out of sync with the mood of the country, but also incapable of coming to terms with it.

If this is in fact the case, then the prognosis for us all is very sobering indeed. After all, it is the task of leaders—and especially of military commanders—to steer a viable course between the desirable and the attainable. They cannot achieve that goal simply by wistfully recalling the past and berating the inadequacies of the present. Rather, we have every right to expect that they identify—and indicate to us all—how we might best adapt our institutions

move toward a more flexible system of selective military service—based on a framework of more explicit (and far more substantial) material incentives for personnel at all ranks and levels?

To their credit, Shahak's two immediate predecessors, Dan Shomron and Ehud Barak, set the ball rolling in the right direction: the former when publicly advocating the need for a "smaller and smarter" army; the latter when giving the Shafir Commission a comprehensive mandate to investigate future IDF manpower policies.

True, very little came of those initiatives. But they did at least convey the sense that people in positions of responsibility were considering the possibility of structural reforms in our military and—no less important—keeping the Israeli public informed of the general direction of their thinking.

Shahak, by contrast, has allowed the momentum thus generated to wind down. During his tenure, the Shafir report seems to have been buried and the notion of a different, perhaps better, IDF to have been placed in abeyance.

Even if he has taken steps toward some change, as might certainly be the case, the general impression remains "more of the same." Largely as a result, the IDF as a whole has lost the opportunity to convince Israeli citizens that they are being consulted on an issue of supreme importance to us all.

A short while ago, the cabinet decided to extend Shahak's term of office (originally due to end on January 1, 1998) by seven months. Consequently, he will still be chief of staff come next May, when Israel celebrates its fiftieth birthday. Doubtless, Shahak will be called upon to make another speech to mark the occasion. Is it too late to hope that this time he will seize the opportunity to make a more constructive contribution toward mending at least some of the bridges between the IDF and Israeli society at large?

The writer is professor of political studies at Bar-Ilan University, and a senior fellow of the BESA Center for Strategic Studies.

The need to apologize

Ehud Barak's recent apology for "the pain and suffering" caused immigrants from Arab lands by the Labor party in the '50s ignored one critical issue: What exactly was he apologizing for?

Some critics have focused on Barak's transparent political motivation for the "apology." Others have denied that there is anything for which to apologize. If the refugees were housed in tin shacks, they maintain, it was only because the country was too impoverished to do any more.

The debate is thus reduced to one over the quality of the accommodations provided the new immigrants. Ignored is the real sin of those years and beyond: The systematic attempt to destroy the religious beliefs of the newcomers to Israel.

In this respect, at least, there was no discrimination between Ashkenazim and Sephardim. The ruling Zionist elite was equally eager to destroy the religiosity of Ashkenazim when the opportunity presented itself, as it did with the 1,000 Polish orphans who gathered in Teheran between 1939 and 1942.

Over 80 percent of these children came from religious homes. In Teheran, the children were prevented from saying Kaddish for their parents and punished when they persisted. Refugee rabbis in Teheran were denied access to the children. The Jewish Agency informed the Polish government-in-exile, which was paying for the camp in Teheran, that it would forgo all funding if the Polish government insisted that the children be provided with religious instruction.

When the head of the camp, a member of Hashomer Hatzair, was told that the children were refusing to eat non-kosher food, he replied, "Let one or two die of starvation and they will soon forget about kosher food."

Once in Israel, few children were placed in religious institutions, despite the promise of Youth Aliya head, Henrietta Szold that placement would be in accord with family background.

Agudat Israel, the party to which the parents of over 60 percent of the children had belonged in Poland, prepared hundreds of places for them in Israel. Yet only 30 out of 1,000 children were placed in Agudat institutions. In one camp, Szold herself did the selection. Though 21 of the 29 children had learned in *hadarim* or Bais-Yakov schools, not one was placed in an Agudat institution.

JONATHAN ROSENBLUM

Judaism from the younger generation of immigrants from Arab lands.

A government commission established in the '50s to study the absorption of the Yemenite community found that the prime objective of the government's absorption policy was "adaptation of the child to the mode of living expressed in the community at large," a euphemism for uprooting their religious identity.

That same commission found that the shaving of sidelocks, an important symbol of religious identity for Yemenite Jews, was a "methodical practice." So too, the commission found, was "the disturbance of traditional religious study." The tents for prayer were locked to keep children from gathering for religious instruction and holy books removed and strewn on the ground.

Yemenite teachers were forbidden to teach the children. Anyone religious was barred from the refugee camps. When the Yemenite Jews protested this policy in the Ein Shemer camp, one was shot dead by the authorities.

The thread running through all Israeli absorption efforts is the arrogant contempt for Jewish religion

The children were forced to live apart from their families in central children's houses, where the guides told them "Shabbat does not exist in Eretz Yisrael" and took them on Shabbat hikes, during which they were encouraged to pick oranges in imitation of their counselors.

Parents who wanted to send their children to religious schools were threatened with eviction from their homes and the loss of their Histadrut work permits—a virtual sentence of starvation in those days. All this was possible because the Yemenite Jews were subhuman primitives in the eyes of those charged with their absorption. Their fervent religious belief was simply one more proof. The absorption authorities considered it an act of mercy to remove the children from their parents.

A Mrs. Tanani told a *Ma'ariv* reporter of approaching the hospital bed of her child one day and finding two women arguing over who would get him. She overheard the nurse say, "What does it matter? They have such big

families anyway."

The next day she was told the boy had died.

When a government inquiry was set up to investigate charges that Yemenite children had been kidnapped, 342 complaints were filed by parents who were told that their children needed hospitalization, and never saw them again. In many cases, the parents were never even informed of the "deaths" of their children, and when they inquired, they were told that they had been already been buried, often in unmarked graves.

The story of the kidnappings will not die in the Yemenite community because every family has such a story. One man with whom I pray told me how his mother found him as a toddler being herded onto a Jewish Agency plane from Aden. Later he was removed from the children's house in Rosh Ha'ayin, without his parents' knowledge. It took them two years before they found him on a secular kibbutz and reclaimed him.

The focus of the North African aliyah, too, was on separating children from parents. Parents were encouraged to send their children alone, and those who refused remained stranded in transit camps for much longer periods.

To encourage parents to allow their children to go alone, Youth Aliya promised that they would be placed in religious institutions. Most were sent instead to secular kibbutzim.

A 1956 counselor's manual from one such kibbutz emphasizes that the children are to be taught that "belief in God is a reactionary doctrine that has no place among mankind's progressive fighters."

THE bright thread running through all Israeli absorption efforts is the arrogant contempt for Jewish religion. Those who complain loudest of religious coercion today were themselves perpetrators of deliberate and systematic coercion of hundreds of thousands of children to shed their religious upbringing.

Yet rather than apologizing, the perpetrators continue to boast of it. After Operation Solomon, Jerusalem's *Kol Ha'ir* wrote: "So it was with the Jews of Yemen, so too with those of North Africa. So that the young at least would have some chance, the tradition had to be destroyed, the family had to be destroyed.... Better the salvation of the young so that at least they can integrate."

It is that paternalistic contempt for our own religion for which Ehud Barak should be apologizing.

The writer is a Jerusalem Post columnist.

The tone of Shahak's complaints about the condition of Israeli society generates considerable concern. They suggest Shahak is not only out of sync with the mood of the country, but also incapable of coming to terms with it

her status.

Shahak himself certainly is not to be "blamed" for the decline of the IDF's public status. It is simply his misfortune—personal as well as professional—to be holding high office at a time when that process has assumed major proportions and seems set to scale yet further heights.

Having worked long, hard and with great distinction and bravery to attain his present position, he has every right to be disappointed when he discovers that the IDF over which he exercises supreme command now enjoys only a modicum of the public support granted to his more fortunate predecessors.

BUT sympathy for Shahak's personal feelings must not blind us to the inadequacies of the chief of staff's response to the situation which he presently confronts. Far

to challenging circumstances and thereby improve their organizational proficiency.

Judged by those standards, it is questionable whether our current chief of staff has risen to the challenge of the day. Instead of suggesting how the IDF might best adjust itself to its new societal environment, he has in effect simply called upon society to conform to the IDF's old expectations.

Quite apart from being a forlorn hope, this also seems to be a misguided policy. Would it not make more sense for the chief of staff to initiate a fundamental public debate about the continued viability of our traditional force structures?

Can we continue to maintain compulsory universal conscription for young women as well as men, and mandatory reserve duty? Do we need to do so? Should we not, perhaps, instead

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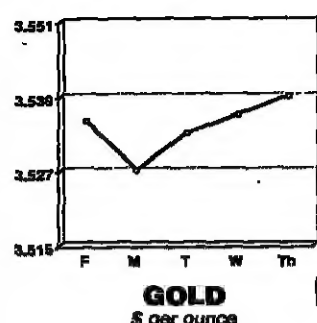
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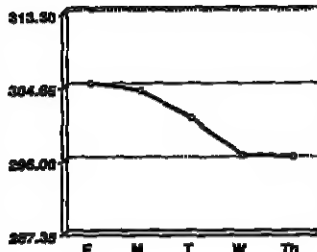
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DOLLAR / SHEKEL

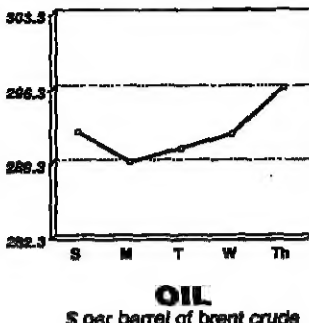


GOLD

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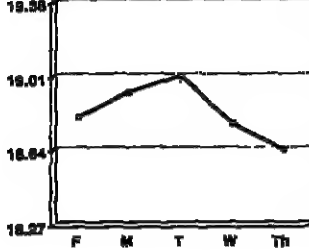


MAOF INDEX

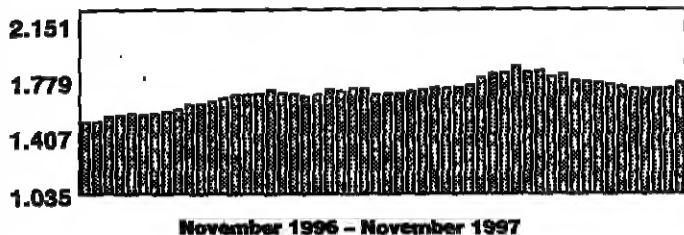


OIL

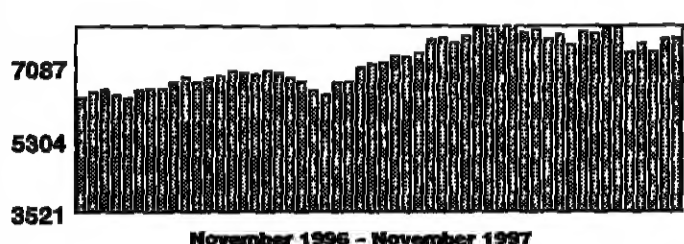
\$ per barrel of Brent crude



DOLLAR / DEUTSCHEMARK



DOW JONES INDUST. AVG.



Siemens, Wuxton pay \$75m. for RADNet

Tel Aviv-based RADNet, which developed a multiplexer in ATM technology (fast communication protocol), has been sold to the German communications concern Siemens, and Canadian company, Wuxton, for \$75 million.

Wuxton and Siemens are potential RADNet customers, which has not yet started to sell its products. *Globes*

Radisson free flight deal

To celebrate Israel's 50th anniversary, Radisson Meriah hotels yesterday announced it will offer free flights for anyone traveling from Europe that stays in any three of the company's hotels here for a minimum 12 nights. The offer is in effect from March 1 to November 15 of next year. *David Harris*

Africa Israel pays NIS 7.1m. for 80% of Gottex

Africa Israel Investments announced yesterday the signing of an agreement to purchase 80 percent of the swimsuit maker Gottex for NIS 7.1 million. The other 20% will remain in the hands of the company's founder, Leah Gottlieb, who will continue to control the design of Gottex's products. *Dan Gerstenfeld*

July-Sept. housing starts plunge 23%

By DAVID HARRIS

Housing start-ups shrank 23 percent in the third quarter to 11,180, compared to the same period last year, with the majority of the slump registered in the public sector, according to figures published yesterday by the Central Bureau of Statistics.

The July to September figures point to a quicker slowdown in the construction industry. In the public sector there were 3,530 start-ups, down from 5,900 (-40%) in the same period last year and 7,650 in the private sector, a fall of 1,020 (12%) on the third quarter of 1996.

The data for the first nine months of the

year show an overall 12% decline to 34,550 in comparison to the total for the equivalent period last year and a 33% fall on the 1995 number. In the public sector there was a 15% decline to 11,870 and a 10% fall in the private sector to 22,680.

These figures, coupled with the forecasts for economic recovery by late 1998 or early 1999 means house prices will begin rising once again in some 12 months, according to Anglo Saxon Real Estate agency managing director Meir Nachshon.

"I don't know whether to be happy or sad when I tell you that our predictions for 1996 and 1997 were correct so I expect we'll be right next year, too," said

Nachshon.

The government's stated aim is to construct and market 50,000 new homes each year. At the end of July, Israel Lands Administration Director General Bertie Brudo said building sales would be down as much as 20,000 on the 50,000 target. However, this week he said that in recent days there has been a considerable increase in the number of sales of land for construction and added that he believes the shortfall in land sales will only be minimal.

Given the 50,000 targets for land sales and construction, Nachshon maintained there will be a shortfall this year of 5,000 to 6,000. It is also true to say that demand is

down to some 45,000 this year, said Nachshon. Looking ahead to 1998, he predicted a similar decline in housing start-ups to that seen this year, meaning only 35,000 to 40,000 will begin. "That leads to a shortfall of at least 5,000," said Nachshon.

In the bureau statistics, there was good news on the housing completions front, with 15,230 buildings being constructed in the third quarter, the highest quarterly figure for five years. Throughout the year there has been an increase in the number of completions, up 24% in the first nine months. This is largely because of the high number of start-ups during 1994 and 1995, according to the bureau.



Lowering prices

A Russian sales assistant changes the price tag for vodka in a supermarket in line with plans to change the denomination of the ruble. Starting January 1, three zeroes will be knocked off the face value of the ruble. *(Reuters)*

Sharansky apologizes to EU for juice episode

By DAVID HARRIS

Industry and Trade Minister Natan Sharansky apologized yesterday to the Commission of the European Union for Israel's handling of the ongoing orange juice controversy, his senior adviser Eli Kazhdan told *The Jerusalem Post*.

Intensive negotiations are scheduled to begin in Brussels today in a bid to resolve the four-year dispute. Earlier this month the EU advised importers that all Israeli exports could be in breach of trade stipulations. This followed allegations that Israeli manufacturers were using Brazilian oranges in fruit juice exports to Europe. The accusation has been strongly refuted by manufacturers, who say any retroactive fines could kill off the industry, which has been declining through the 1990s.

Sharansky and Customs and VAT Director Moti Ayalon yesterday told five commissioners they were keen for an early agreement. Indicating the desire for a fresh start, Sharansky informed the diplomats that neither he nor Finance Minister Yaskov Neeman, nor Ayalon, were involved in the original disagreement, said Kazhdan. Sharansky said he would not want the dispute to continue, calling it "a thorn in the side."

The minister then apologized for lengthy delays in supplying information requested by the EU. "We are sorry this has happened and we realize this has strained our relationship," said Sharansky, according to Kazhdan.

In response the commissioners promised to withdraw the warnings to importers once the issue was resolved. While Sharansky returned home last night, Ayalon remained in Brussels to lead the negotiations.

The Israelis also raised a request to allow goods produced jointly in Israel and Jordan or the PA to be allowed into the EU under favorable trade conditions.

"The US has made efforts of late to welcome this sort of activity, with the joint venture in Irbid," said Kazhdan, referring to the agreement to allow Jordanians in Irbid to use an extension of the US-Israel free trade agreement. "The EU, which has free trade agreements with both, doesn't encourage economic development."

The commissioners promised to investigate once the orange juice issue was resolved.

Bank Leumi's 3rd quarter net rises 8.4%

Bank Leumi, the country's second largest bank, reported yesterday that third-quarter net profit rose 8.4 percent to NIS 201.9 million from NIS 186.2m. in the same period last year.

During the first nine months of 1997 net profit surged 138.6% to NIS 1.04 billion from NIS 424.8m in the corresponding period last year. Most of the rise is attributed to a NIS 464.6m. capital gain from the sale of shares in Leumi Insurance Holdings and Africa Israel Investments.

Net return on capital, calculated on an annual basis, reached 15.5%, compared with 7.7% a

year earlier and 8.1% in 1996. Net operating profit in the first nine months of 1997 increased 44.7% to NIS 536.9m. from NIS 371m. in the corresponding period in 1996.

Loans to the public amounted to NIS 84.4b., representing an increase of 9.5% compared with the equivalent period in 1996. Deposits from the public totaled NIS 84.4b. an increase of 9.5% in a year earlier.

In a statement, the bank said that the groups' profits were

influenced by an increase in the provision for doubtful debts and a decrease of NIS 20.8m. in the group's share in the profits of associated companies, mainly as a result of the decline in the bank's holding in non-banking corporations.

United Mizrahi Bank said that third-quarter net rose 27.6% to NIS 70.7 million from NIS 55.4m a year ago. During the first nine months of the year net profit increased 41% to NIS 181.4m from NIS 128.7 at the same period of 1996.

Net return on capital was 12.4% against 9.7% in the equivalent period last year and 6.7% in 1996.

The bank said that earnings from financing operations, before provision for doubtful debts, rose 6.1% in the first nine months to NIS 730.1m. compared with NIS

688.4m. at the same period last year.

Operating and other income was NIS 486.4m. compared with NIS 467.1m. in the same period last year. The bank said that the increase largely derived from the growth in income from securities activity and a rise in foreign currency trading.

Mishkan Hapolim Mortgage Bank reported that third-quarter net profit rose 22% percent to NIS 33.5m. from NIS 26m. in the corresponding quarter of 1996.

During the first nine months of the year net profit climbed 19.7% to NIS 86.8m from NIS 72.5m a year ago.

The operating income of Israel's second largest mortgage bank rose in the last quarter to NIS 45.9m. from NIS 38m. a year ago. In the first nine months operating income totaled NIS 131.3m. versus NIS 116.5m. in the corresponding period in 1996.

Bank Otzar Hahayal said that third-quarter net profit rose to NIS 11.2m. from NIS 10.2m. a year ago. During the first nine months net profit remained almost unchanged at NIS 27.2m. compared with NIS 27.1m. in the corresponding period in 1996.

Net return on capital was 14.8% compared with 14.9% at the equivalent time last year.

RESULTS

By DAN GERSTENFELD

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In the matter of Banque Commerciale S.A., Geneva, in liquidation by composition, as ordered by the Court of Justice on November 9, 1984, creditors who have not yet withdrawn their dividends are requested to do so by January 14, 1998, by writing to the following address: Banque Commerciale S.A., en liquidation concordataire P.O. Box 3201, CH - 1211 Geneva 3

or to the liquidator's address: ATAG Ernst & Young S.A. P.O. Box 3270, CH - 1211 Geneva 3

Falling such instructions to the bank by January 14, 1998, and provided the ten-year time limit has elapsed, in accordance with provision 42, para. 2 of the Ordinance of April 11, 1935, concerning the composition procedure for banks and savings banks, such unpaid dividends shall be pooled with the estate and distributed according to provision 268 of the Law on Debt Collection and Bankruptcy.

Geneva, November 21, 1997

Banque Commerciale S.A.
En liquidation concordataire
The Liquidator:
ATAG Ernst & Young S.A.

TASE ends higher led by banks

Tel Aviv

Stocks rose, with bank shares leading the risers.

The Mishanin Index rose 1.24 percent to 285.82, the Maof Index of 25 issues rose 1.48% to 296.3, and the Tel Aviv Continuous Trading Index added 0.47%, to 95.6. For the week, the Maof rose 2.6%, the Mishanin rose 2.2%, and the TACT added 0.8%.

"This market cannot stay isolated; it always keeps its eye on the world," said Eli Nahum, head of trading at Zannex Securities Ltd. If other markets stay calm next week "we'll see the [Tel Aviv] market continuing to look good."

Bank Leumi, Israel's second-largest bank by assets, yesterday said third-quarter net income rose 8.4%.

"Almost a third of the volume was driven by the banking sector, and this is the story for the whole day," Nahum said.

Discount Bank, Bank Leumi and Bank Hapoalim were the most-traded issues, trading NIS 25.1 million, NIS 24.2m., and NIS 11.9m, respectively. Discount rose 0.5%, Bank Leumi rose 2.5%, and Bank Hapoalim rose 3%.

Across the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange, NIS 225.6m. of shares traded, 48% more than the month's daily average of NIS 152.7m. shekels. Nearly two issues advanced for every one that fell.

Europe

UK stocks were mixed as a stronger pound hurt exporters, off-

setting gains in financial stocks sparked by robust earnings from Royal Bank of Scotland Plc and 3i Group Plc. Mining companies added to declines.

Investors were encouraged after Japan's benchmark Nikkei Index, which recently threatened to lead global markets down, surged 3.5% on optimism that the government will take stronger steps to bail out the country's faltering financial industry.

"Japan's probably good for sentiment," said Nick Brind, a fund manager at Exeter Asset Management with about £400 million invested in UK equities.

"The market won't go much lower. We expect it will pick up and pay for Christmas; it's got a lot of support."

The benchmark FT-SE 100 index fell 2.2 points, or 0.04%, to



Maof 296.3 ▲ 1.48%

FTSE 4889 ▼ 0.04%

Nikkei 16603.2 ▲ 3.48%

4889.0. With US markets closed in observance of the Thanksgiving holiday, trading was light, with 263.4 million shares traded compared with a daily average of 347.5 million shares over the past

20 trading sessions. Broader indexes were also mixed.

The FT-SE 250 Index of mid-sized companies advanced 6.5 points to 4658.3, while the FT-SE 350 Index, a combination of the other two indexes, lost 0.2 points to 2361.2.

The pound rose against the dollar, hurting exporters as their products become more expensive abroad and crimping profit when it is brought home and converted. The pound was last at 0.5979, from 0.5973 Wednesday.

Asia

Japanese stocks surged, led by banks and brokerages, on optimism a wave of bankruptcies will force the government to take stronger steps to bail out the

country's faltering financial industry.

Mitsubishi Trust & Banking Corp., Dai-ichi Kangyo Bank Ltd. and Sumitomo Bank Ltd. led the advance. Backing the trend were two banks burdened by bad loans — Long-Term Credit Bank of Japan Ltd., which edged down, Yasuda Trust & Banking Co., which was unchanged.

Gains by major manufacturers firmly established in the US and other overseas markets, such as Sony Corp., contributed to the rise.

"I would call that a flight to quality, particularly in the financial sector," said Christophe Aurand, chief investment officer at Taiyo Life Gamma Asset Management Ltd., who helps manage \$4.2 billion in assets. The benchmark Nikkei 225 stock average rose 557.65 points.

or 3.48%, to 16,603.20, its biggest percentage gain since November 17. The broader Toxix average of all shares on the first section of the Tokyo Stock Exchange rose 30.18, or 2.5%, to 1238.77.

Comments by Finance Minister Hiroshi Mitsuoka on Wednesday showed a new sense of urgency that traders and analysts said may point to new government support. The ruling Liberal Democratic Party has already hinted it will use taxpayers' money to guarantee customer assets at failed banks and brokerages. "We're seeing a sense of crisis in the government," said Kaoru Ichikawa, chief manager of equity trading at Kokusai Securities Co. The government has figured out it needs to help financial institutions, something investors already knew, he said. (Bloomberg)

Mark falls as German recovery seen tenuous

The dollar extended Wednesday's gains against the mark amid evidence Germany's recovery is tenuous, while US growth remains solid.

The head of Germany's council of economic advisers, Herbert Hax, said the Western German economy is in a prolonged "phase of economic weakness," and that government forecasts for stronger growth may be inaccurate.

The US currency reached a one-month high above 1.76 marks Wednesday, as evidence of strong economic growth in the US keeps rate-rise expectations alive there.

"The need for monetary policy tightening in the US is looming much larger than in Germany,"

said Steven Mansell, senior strategist at BNP Capital Markets. "All the figures in the US are coming out on the strong side, with the crisis in Asia having no discernible impact on consumer sentiment."

The dollar rose to 1.7683 marks, extending Wednesday's rise to 1.7636 — the strongest since October 27. In other trading, the dollar pared gains earlier in the week against the yen as the Japanese government moved closer to committing public funds to aid the troubled banking industry.

The dollar was at 126.96 yen, down from a five-year high Tuesday of just under 128.00.

Weak German growth is likely to further delay any interest rate

risers there, undermining the mark by keeping the return on mark-denominated deposits from rising.

Hax said the government forecasts for economic growth — 2.5% in 1997 and 3% in 1998 — are dependent on export growth and don't reveal how weak domestic demand and investment is.

"As Hax said, we have exported growth but it isn't yet feeding through into the domestic economy," said Mansell at BNP. "The government's growth forecasts, to be credible, must be based on strong consumer demand."

In the US, however, "one can't escape the fact that US growth is domestically led," Mansell said. That leaves the US less suscepti-



Dollar 3.539 ▲ 0.09%

Basket 3.8108 ▼ 0.1%

Mark 2.0029 ▼ 0.67%

Sterling 5.9183 no change

ble to turmoil in Asia that could dampen US trade, while Germany's export-led economy

stands to lose significantly, he said.

Figures released Wednesday showed US gross domestic product at a 3.3% annual rate in the third quarter, down from an original estimate of 3.5%, according to the Commerce Department. A separate report showed first-time jobless claims fell last week, suggesting unemployment remains low.

Also fueling expectations German rates won't rise as soon as US rates, Bundesbank council member Edgar Meister yesterday said Europe's common currency should start with interest rates at low German levels, instead of converging at a higher level.

On Wednesday, another council member, Guntram Palm said

European central banks have room to set interest rates independently of each other through next year, hinting Germany may not raise its rates to bring them in line with higher rates elsewhere in Europe.

"The Bundesbank can't do anything on its own, without the cooperation of other countries, in this fragile world economic climate. They'll wait at least until the end of the year," said Dieter Huchy, a trader at Landesbank Schleswig-Holstein in Kiel.

In Japan, Vice Finance Minister Takeshi Komura said the government stands ready to support its financial institutions, though any

use of public funds must have public support.

The dollar's rise against the yen earlier in the week was capped as traders fretted that Japan may soon adopt a plan for assisting its troubled banking system, a move that could restore confidence in Japanese financial assets and the yen.

Three major Japanese financial companies went under in the last month, and a smaller regional bank failed this week.

Japan's Finance Minister Hiroshi Mitsuoka said he would respond "with great interest" to proposals that Japan use public money to help ailing banks. (Bloomberg)

Zinc rises on expectations of drop in China's exports

Zinc rose for a second day amid expectations China's exports will drop in 1998 after a sevenfold increase in the first 10 months of this year cut the nation's stockpiles. Chinese deliveries are largely responsible for a 123,800-ton, 25 percent rise in the London Metal Exchange's global zinc stockpile since September 9, analysts say. Three-month zinc rose \$6 a ton to \$1,173 a ton on the LME.

Gold prices were little changed.

Precious metals

On Wednesday in London, gold fell to its lowest level since March 1985 as traders bet the precious metal will fall further amid concerns that central banks will sell more gold. Gold for immediate delivery fell 5 cents to \$296.50 an ounce.

Platinum rose in inter-bank trading. Johnson Matthey Plc, the

world's largest platinum marketing company, said its first-half profit rose 31% on climbing income from its electronic materials, precious metals and auto-catalyst divisions. Platinum for immediate delivery rose \$3 to \$384 an ounce.

Oil

Crude oil prices were little changed after a decline, as Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries ministers decided to reconvene to discuss quotas before tomorrow's scheduled meeting. Crude tumbled almost 3% on Wednesday, led by a

decline in US oil product markets.

In Jakarta, the OPEC winter meeting was due to start its second closed-door session yesterday to start to thrash out the possibility of raising its output quota.

January Brent crude futures traded 6 cents higher at \$18.62 a barrel, after closing 53 cents lower Wednesday.

Others

Copper was little changed. Prices rose Wednesday as continued economic growth in the US and robust European demand offset expectations Asia will experi-

ence further slowdown into next year. The benchmark three-month forward copper contract on the LME last traded unchanged at \$1.883 a metric ton.

Coffee futures rose amid speculation that Vietnamese growers are delaying sales of lower-grade robusta coffee beans due to expectations that prices could go higher in the coming weeks. While Vietnamese coffee production is expected to rise this year, growers are delaying sales in the hope that they can secure higher prices for their beans later this year, analysts said.

About 97% of Vietnam's crop is made up of robusta coffee, which is traded in London and is more bitter tasting than arabica beans traded in New York. Robusta coffee for January delivery, the most active contract, rose \$6 to \$1,636 a metric ton on the London International Financial Futures and Options Exchange. (Bloomberg)

UK bonds fall on rate hike fears

UK bonds fell amid lingering concern about how high official interest rates are headed in the light of the higher inflation forecasts made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer earlier this week.

The benchmark 7.25 percent 10-year UK government bond fell 1/4, or 25 pence per 100 pound bond, to 105. The yield rose 3 basis points to 6.56%. The December long gilt futures contract fell 9/32 to 118 17/32.

On Tuesday, Chancellor Gordon Brown, in a statement forecasting the March 1998 budget, raised his forecast for inflation excluding mortgage interest payments to 0.25-0.50 percentage points, to 2.75% for 1997 and to 3.0% for next year.

"The market was a little unnerved by the higher inflation forecasts, which increased expectations for further rate rise next year," said Doug Jones, senior fixed income fund manager at Gartmore Asset Management, which controls about \$12 billion of international fixed-income assets. "That sentiment has spilled over into today."

The yield on the December short starting futures contract, a measure of interest-rate expectations, rose 1 basis point to 7.69 percent. The yield on the June 1998 contract rose 4 basis points to 7.73%. That yield has risen 12 basis points since Tuesday's statement, suggesting expectations for further base rate increases in the first half of next year are growing.

"There is clearly a greater than 50% risk of a further quarter-point rate rise, and that's reflected in the market," said Jones. "Whether it's needed or not is another matter, but the Bank of England may want a

safety valve in the fight to win its anti-inflation spurs."

Since May the Bank of England has raised its benchmark interest rate 1.25 percentage points to 7.25% in a bid to slow economic growth and inflation. The latest of the five quarter-point increases came November 6.

The Bank of England Governor Eddie George was expected to answer questions yesterday from a Treasury Select Committee on the central bank's quarterly inflation report, released earlier this month. "There could be some interesting questions about why the Bank's inflation forecast is lower than the government's, but it really comes too late in the day to have impact on the market," said Tom Rayner, international economist at SocGen Securities.

Among shorter-maturity gilts — those most responsive to changes in expectations for official interest rates — the yield on the 6%, two-year note rose 4 basis points to 7.10%. The yield on the 7%, five-year note due 2002 rose 3 basis points to 6.81%.

Meanwhile, 10-year gilts currently yield 116 basis points more than their German counterparts, up from 115 Wednesday, and up from 102 basis points a month ago. The yield spread is a measure of the additional risk investors perceive in holding gilts rather than German bunds.

"Gilts are a bit of a dilemma for investors at the moment," said Jones at Gartmore. "They look attractive on a spread basis but are expensive on an absolute basis, and so is sterling, which makes the spread trade less attractive." (Bloomberg)

Defense industries officials mum on shaky Polish deal

By ARIEH O'SULLIVAN

Defense industry officials refused to comment yesterday on reports that Poland was reexamining a \$650 million dollar deal for missiles and a fighter helicopter upgrade, and may back out of the agreement.

In Warsaw, Polish Defense Minister Janusz Onyszkiewicz said his new government was scrutinizing the agreement signed by a previous government on October 13.

He said that a new tender might be issued for the supply of a missile integration system for Polish helicopters.

The agreement, which required the approval of both governments, called for Rafael and Elbit Systems Ltd. to supply 5,000 NT-D anti-tank missiles, and El-Op

to install advanced avionics and fire-control systems in the Huzar helicopter.

The contract was won after a nasty competition with a consortium led by the US-based Boeing Corp. The lengthy negotiations sparked questions about military procurement procedures in Poland. Onyszkiewicz said on Wednesday that a special committee with representatives from the foreign, defense and economic ministries would be appointed to decide whether to approve the agreement, which he called "faulty."

His deputy, Romuald Szeremietiew, suggested that Poland might be able to turn to Boeing to integrate the missiles. "The only thing we will take into account is the good of the Polish military," Szeremietiew told The

Associated Press.

According to reports in Poland, Elbit will be encouraged to reach an agreement with Boeing to jointly integrate the missiles. They added that the defense ministry would ask the Polish cabinet to announce a new tender if an agreement is not reached.

Elbit chairman Josef Ackerman was quoted as saying that the NT-D missile is compatible only with Israeli electronic systems. Elbit spokesman Arieh Tal could not be reached for comment. But sources in Elbit dismissed the reports.

"This deal has had its ups and downs for weeks. This is nothing new," said one source.

Rafael spokesman Noach Shahar could not be reached and two other officials at the firm would not comment.



Ethiopian women mark the community's Sigd festival yesterday in Jerusalem.

(Isaac Harari)

Ethiopian community celebrates Sigd festival

By BAT-SHEVA TSUR

Thousands of members of the Ethiopian Jewish community gathered yesterday at Armon Hanatziv in Jerusalem to mark the annual Sigd festival.

They were joined by President Ezer Weizman, Chief Rabbi Yisrael Lau, Absorption Minister Yuli Edelstein, Kessim and secular community leaders.

The Sigd was celebrated in Ethiopia as a day of fasting on the top of a mountain which symbolized Mount Sinai, one month after Simhat Torah, the day on which the Torah was given to the people of Israel. It was a day of prayer for the return to Zion.

Since the completion of the community's aliyah following Operation Solomon, the Sigd has been marked annually on the hilltop which overlooks the Temple Mount. The participants also hold a memorial ceremony for the thousands who died on the long trek from Ethiopia to Zion.

This is a unique community whose gentle spirit and steadfastness have been an example to the entire nation, Weizman said at yesterday's ceremony. He noted with satisfaction the growing numbers of youngsters serving in the IDF and graduating from the universities.

"I am especially happy to see the members of this community who have become officers in the IDF," Weizman said. The community

had faced many difficulties "but we are on the right road," he added.

This is a time for reconciliation and for respect for individuals, Lau said. He noted that the Sigd was a unique festival which showed the close connection of the community to Zion and the Torah.

"We have known difficult days recently but it is time to open a new chapter," the rabbi said.

The Absorption Ministry is making special efforts to help the immigrants in the community who still face difficulties, Edelstein said. He noted that attempts had been made in the past year to find permanent housing for those immigrants still living at caravan sites.

Swiss delay major report on Nazi gold trade

ZURICH (Reuters) — A major report on Switzerland's controversial gold trade with Nazi Germany will not be ready in time for an international conference next week, historians said yesterday. Historians named by the government to investigate the neutral country's role in World War II said new discoveries meant the report could not be released as planned on Monday, one day before a conference on Nazi gold brings opens in London.

But they said they would present on Monday a "statistical summary" of gold operations by the Swiss central bank, which bought Nazi gold during the war and acted as a conduit for German gold sales to other central banks.

"We only recently discovered new elements that require further study and despite the efforts of my staff we were unable to complete the report on time,"

said Jean-Francois Bergier, head of the nine-member independent commission of experts.

Bergier declined to say what the new elements were but he did say they came in part from documents and sources found in the United States and Germany.

A commission statement said the report on Swiss gold buying from Nazi Germany, the first of several papers it is due to produce in the next five years, would now be released in January.

Switzerland has born the brunt of Jewish-led international criticism that its national bank bought large amounts of gold, including gold stolen from occupied countries and concentration camp inmates, from Nazi Germany.

The statement said the delay would also allow the report to incorporate new information from the London conference.

Going nowhere fast

The man who likes to speak of projecting strength to the world is more and more becoming a symbol of weakness. Binyamin Netanyahu is being pulled in a dozen different directions. And the result is paralysis on every front, Herb Keinon writes

A recurrent theme in Binyamin Netanyahu's 1996 election campaign was that the Arabs - indeed the whole world - respect strength and determination.

This message was clear: the Likud would provide a government guided with the strength and resolve needed to get the Palestinians to shout "uncle" at the negotiating table. Eighteen months later, the issues less how the world reacts to strength, and more how the government's internal weaknesses affect the diplomatic process.

This has not been one of Netanyahu's finest weeks. In the past, his crises seemed to come - with apologies to Shakespeare - in single spates, not battalions. Last spring, for example, rioting broke out in Hebron and Bethlehem after the government decided to build on Har Homa.

For a moment it looked as if the country was on the verge of a new infatuation with the atmosphere of crisis permeated Israel's relationship with the Palestinians.

Shortly thereafter came the police decision to indict Netanyahu for involvement in the Bar-On Affair (a recommendation turned down by the state attorney) and everything "almost magically" quieted down in Hebron and Bethlehem. It was as if the fates were being considerate, handing the prime minister just one crisis at a time.

This week the fates were less kind. Just as Netanyahu was wriggling his way out of the latest Likud crisis and attempted palace putsch, the diplomatic front - seemingly quiet for weeks - erupted with a vengeance. At the same time that Netanyahu's ministers threatened mutiny, his right-hand man resigned, possibly to be indicted, and his coalition apparently in shambles, President Bill Clinton - precisely now - not only snubs him for lunch, but also demands that the upcoming withdrawal in the West Bank be significant and credible.

The two crises - the domestic and the diplomatic - are not happening independently of each other, they are not two different planets spinning in separate orbits. Rather, they are moons of the same planet, each influencing the gravitational pull of the other.

THE PROBLEMS inside the Likud ultimately impinge on the diplomatic front, says Reuven Merhav, former director-general of the Foreign Ministry.

"The prime minister, like everyone, has a limited attention span," Merhav says. "If he is busy all day with internal political intrigues, how much can he prepare for the diplomatic front? This now demands complete attention. In the Hebron Agreement, Netanyahu was involved in every comma and sentence. Now he can't give himself over to [diplomatic developments] to the same degree."

Yossi Ben-Aharon, who was the director-general of the Prime Minister's Office under Yitzhak Shamir, agrees, and says that the Likud machinations are robbing Netanyahu of valuable time and energy.

The current situation in the government transmits a sense of confusion and weakness, he says. And if strength generates respect, as Netanyahu has long maintained, then weakness invites the opposite. Ben-Aharon remarks that when the Americans observe the way the government and coalition relate to the prime minister, they see no reason to treat him any better.

Furthermore, says Ben-Aharon, the move to replace the prime minister's top advisers works against the ability to chart a steady course. This coming and going does not give the impression of experienced people leading the way in a thoughtful manner, he says.

Merhav says that just as Israelis are watching every quiver of Yasser Arafat's lip and every shake of his hand, out of concern that the man they sign agreements with today may not be there tomorrow, so too are the Americans and Palestinians carefully watching what is going on inside the Likud, wondering whether the man calling the shots today will last until tomorrow. They too, are planning their next moves accordingly.

ONE MAN obviously hoping that just a few more strategically placed moves will push Netanyahu over the edge is Labor chairman Ehud Barak.

Commenting in a radio interview this week, Barak compared the current situation to a group of people riding a bus driven by a driver who, though properly licensed, gets in an accident once a week. "At some point the passengers will reach the conclusion that they have to switch drivers," Barak said.

One reason Barak has not pushed hard for a national unity government is his apparent feeling that the point where either the Likud or the nation will clamor for



Oleg 97

a new driver is close at hand.

If Barak is encouraged by the polls, which - after the chaotic Likud convention - put him 12 percentage points ahead of Netanyahu, he would do well to look at polls a few months before the 1996 elections that had Peres outpolling Netanyahu by 20 percentage points, and at polls in the summer of 1995 which had Netanyahu beating Yitzhak Rabin by a similar margin.

And if Barak was optimistic that the Likud malcontents would do his work for him, the reconciliation meeting between Limor Livnat and Netanyahu and Avigdor Lieberman's resignation, have taken those coals out of the internal "dump fire" fire.

But while that fire has lost its heat, threats have increased from "Force 17," the name given to the

group of Knesset MKs opposed to any more withdrawals in the West Bank. Tsomet faction MK Moshe Peled, explaining the logic behind the group's threats to pull down the government if Netanyahu decides to implement a further

As to whether bringing down the government might usher Labor back into power, meaning even more withdrawals, Peled says that the Eretz Yisrael lobby "could fight even more forcefully from the opposition."

other hand they maintain that these very threats actually strengthen the government's position in its dealings with the Americans because Netanyahu can then say: "Look, I can't move because the coalition has tied my hands."

As weak, "Force 17" could push too hard and bring Netanyahu to a breaking point, unintentionally forcing him either to call new elections or to form a national unity government with Labor," says Ravid.

But Shas MK Shlomo Benizri doesn't believe "Force 17" is a real threat. "They know that if they bring about the government's collapse, the alternative will be much worse," Benizri adds that from the standpoint of the religious parties, including Shas, the present coalition is an extremely comfortable one. They would be reluctant about bringing about changes that would affect its composition, or their strength inside it.

This attitude is not shared by the remaining coalition parties, Yisrael Ba'aliya and the Third Way. Yisrael Ba'aliya itself is split on the question of how much land to withdraw

from in the next stage. The party is also reluctant to go to new elections out of concern that Lieberman could attract some of the immigrant votes either to the Likud, or to a second immigrant party he may set up. There is also concern inside the party that its own internal wrangling will weaken it at the polls. It's no coincidence, therefore, that Minister Natan Sharansky, as of late, has been raising his voice more forcefully for national unity.

In doing this, Sharansky is joining the Third Way, which has been flying the national unity banner for months. "Ideologically, the only difference between Bibi and Barak," says Third Way MK Alex Lubotzky, "is over the question of who should lead such a government." As proof of this, Lubotzky points to Barak's declaration this week that, if elected, he would be willing to form a national unity government with Netanyahu as his foreign minister. "We have no leverage over Barak," Lubotzky says. "But we do have leverage over Netanyahu. And if he does not make serious calls for national unity by January, we will act."

Such threats, however, have been coming from different corners for months. They haven't changed the composition of the government, but they have created an atmosphere of perpetual confusion. The result of these continual maneuvers, says Aharon Klieman, a professor of diplomacy at Tel Aviv University, is a feeling that no one is in control.

"None of this strengthens Netanyahu or Israel's image," he says. "One doesn't have a sense of a public policy team working together, but rather a team that at cross purposes, each with a different idea of what is good for Israel. It creates a feeling that no one is in charge."

Faced with this situation, says Klieman, those dealing with Netanyahu have three choices. "One alternative is to back off and give him breathing room, out of an understanding that he is in trouble," Klieman says. "Another is to say that Netanyahu cannot stand in the way of furthering the goal, and that he can be learned on to get the ball rolling. The third option is to lean hard on him in the hope that he will fall."

This week has shown that neither the Americans nor the Palestinians nor Netanyahu's own coalition partners are going to give him any breathing room. And as to whether they are going to push Netanyahu in order to get him to move, or push him order to knock him out, the answer to that question is very much in the eye of the beholder.

The two crises - the domestic and diplomatic - are not happening independently of each other; they are not two different planets spinning in separate orbits. Rather, they are moons of the same planet, each influencing the gravitational pull of the other

withdrawal, says, "I don't want to be a part of a government that gives up Eretz Yisrael. Settlement [in Judea and Samaria] is more important than any government."

Conversations with members of "Force 17" reveal that they are playing a double game. On one hand they are threatening to bring down the government, while on the

The problem with the game, says Degel Hatorah MK Avraham Ravid, is that it could - like all games - spin out of control. "Because they perceive Netanyahu

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The Or Akiva unemployment office: Over the past year, more than half the employable women in town have been without jobs. (Jeremy Feldman)

Out of work

Unemployment has hit a four-year high. And it's not just towns in the North and Negev that are affected, as Allison Kaplan Sommer discovered in Or Akiva

Promises, promises, then lies and more lies. That is how Shoshana Ifach, 40, a resident of Or Akiva, describes how the nation's leaders are coping with worsening unemployment.

Ifach, a brunette dressed in a red T-shirt, with gold jewelry, mutters her dissatisfaction while making her way to the cafe in the center of town — a hangout for the local jobless.

"When I see how little the politicians care about people like me, it makes me want to burn my Israeli identity card," she says bitterly.

She joins her friend Shula, also unemployed, an older woman dressed in a colorful caftan, on the cafe patio. They are the only two women in the place. Next to them is a table full of men in their 30s and 40s, sipping coffee and smoking cigarettes.

Inside the cafe, older, more derelict-looking men, are nursing mid-morning beers. Ask the group what they think of the government's approach to unemployment and they laugh. "Our leaders are too busy with their politics to help us find jobs," shouts one.

"They are too busy figuring out how to topple Bibi, or how to protect their own backs and keep their own jobs. Basically, they are interested in everything but the problems of little people."

Ifach says she has had no steady job for an entire decade and has only worked on and off in factories, restaurants, or doing house-keeping, never for more than a few months at a time.

Despite the fact that Or Akiva, just north of Caesarea, is an hour's commute to several cities, transportation is problematic for those who do not own a car. The only bus out of the city goes to Hadera. There is no direct service to Haifa, Tel Aviv or Netanya; places where there are jobs. Even when people are willing to make the trip, they find they cannot afford the transportation, and few employers are willing to cover the expense.

Ifach's 24-year-old daughter commutes just to work in a day-

care center. "There are no jobs in this area," she says.

"All of the jobs I had were far away and who is willing to work for a low wage and lose half of it on travel expenses, never mind spending three hours a day on a bus?" she adds.

Politicians and economists expressed great concern when the national jobless rate hit a four-year high of 8.7 percent in October.

Yet for Or Akiva, the figure is low compared to their local jobless rate of 9.75%.

Or Akiva has struggled with unemployment for years, but the problem has worsened since the start of the '90s when immigrants from the former Soviet Union began streaming in. The town was considered ideal for immigrant absorption at the time, being relatively close to the center of the country, with cheap housing. Construction boomed and the town's population doubled, intensifying competition for jobs.

In recent weeks, the national spotlight has turned to the troubled towns of the North and the Negev, where protests against layoffs and imminent factory closings exploded this week. But Or Akiva's plight shows that the signs of economic slowdown also exist close to the country's center.

"We have our finger on the pulse of the slowdown because people come to us when they lose their jobs, and recently, they have been coming," says Haim Bar, manager of the government Employment Service's Samaria and Sharon districts, which include Or Akiva. The service, which belongs to the Ministry of

Labor and Social Affairs, is responsible for job placement and approval of unemployment benefits.

"There is an overall increase in firings, you can't really trace this trend to the breakdown of one particular industry or another," Bar says. "People are being laid off in all areas, in retail, in service industries, and in production."

At the Or Akiva unemployment office, just a look at the faces of those filing in to pick up unemployment checks practically tells their story. One of those on line, Morris, a 59-year-old immigrant from Moldova who does not speak Hebrew, worked for the Antiquities Authority at an excavation site until he was laid off a month ago because of cutbacks. Another, Ella, 45, was laid off by a pharmaceutical manufacturer. Jake, 21, lost his job as a messenger for a company where he had worked for two years.

"We'd expected a significant improvement in the area of Or Akiva during these years. The forecasts had been that the new industrial parks and the businesses that have relocated there would create as many as 4,000 new jobs," Bar says. "But in reality, only 1,600 jobs have been created. That's managed to counteract the recent firings, but hasn't really improved things significantly."

Bar explains that "many businesses simply brought their old workers with them from previous locations. The other reason is that since they were building new facilities, many of the companies chose to invest in new equipment that require a lower level of manpower."

At the local cafe, many, such as

Ifach, blame the immigrants for the job shortage.

"It's all been bad since the new immigrants came here. Since they came, we've watched them get ahead while we who were born here, and served this country, stay behind," alleges Ifach.

"I look for jobs, they say they are not interested in me. I see the Russians getting the jobs. Maybe if I dyed my hair blonde and learned to speak Russian I could get a job, too."

Yet officials say that some of the most dire cases of unemployment involve immigrants, particularly some from the more far-flung republics of the Caucasus region.

Government statistics only define new immigrants as those who came to Israel less than three years ago, yet there are indications that the problem of finding a job lingers beyond that period. Moshe Nissim, manager of Or Akiva's unemployment bureau, estimates that among those who immigrated there since 1990, 70% are unemployed.

BACK AT the cafe, Shula pulls out her social-security slip. She says that although her son is now out of high school, making him a potential wage earner, her monthly income has dipped from NIS 1,878 a month to NIS 1,355.

Her son, who is unemployed, faces IDF recruitment only in the spring. "Everyday he goes out looking for work and comes back with nothing. He asks me why should he go to the army and serve the country if the country has nothing to offer him in return."

Those who bear the brunt of the frustration are the clerks who work with the jobless every day. Nissim, 34, says that recent months have been the toughest of his five-year tenure managing the unemployment office.

In the past month alone, there have been five incidents in which a job seeker has become violent, requiring police to intervene. In one case Nissim was hit by an unemployed man.

The office receptionists, Rita and Rina, endure verbal abuse on a regular basis, both at the office and on the street. Their jobs make them unpopular, since they are in charge of deciding whether a candidate has made a sincere enough effort to find a job. Unemployment benefits can be suspended for three months if an able-bodied job seeker seems unwilling to work.

Those who tend to get violent are those who are issued a "refusal" slip. While they may seem cruel at times, the refusals are a necessary mechanism, Bar contends.

"It's depressing but true. The reason many people end up taking a job and going to work is because of the threat of losing their benefits. Of course we would prefer to be kind and goodhearted, but without that push, I know that far fewer people would get up in the morning and go to work," Bar says.

There are some unemployed who clearly aren't interested in finding a job. Some are among the denizens of the cafe in Or Akiva.

Levi Shalom, 44, for example, is defined as unemployed, although he says he makes enough as a lifeguard in the summer to get through the year without other work.

But many people who genuinely want to work have trouble finding a job doing something besides cleaning offices. The situation is particularly difficult for women, Nissim reports. Over the



Shoshana Ifach (right) and friend Shula have coffee at an Or Akiva hangout frequented by the unemployed. Ifach: "When I see how little the politicians care about people like me, it makes me want to burn my Israeli identity card." (Jeremy Feldman)

past year, the percentage of Or Akiva jobless among women has been between 54% and 60%.

"Once, in a factory, somebody sat and operated machines all day, and someone else carried boxes," Nissim says.

"Today, they want the same worker to be able to do both. So when they fire workers, they fire the women who are less useful for the heavier physical work," he adds.

"The industry that employed the most women, textiles, is in decline. A large facility here closed up and moved to the Palestinian Authority. I have mixed feelings about that one. On one hand, I hate to see more women unemployed. On the other, working in textiles can be terrible, long hours, low pay, and very bad conditions. Still, it is work," Nissim continues.

Men who are willing to do anything can usually find low-paying, low-prestige work in construction, but even in this labor-intensive field, the going is not always easy.

"Contractors claim to be desperate for Israelis willing to work in construction, but the truth is that they prefer Palestinians from the territories and foreign workers. Israelis, usually from Arab towns, are usually the first to be fired when there are cutbacks, because they command higher wages and require the payment of social benefits," says Bar.

As for the booming high-tech industries, most are geographically out of reach for Or Akiva residents, and as far as adequate education and training goes, they might as well be living on a different planet.

Companies such as Nice Systems in Tel Aviv, which is involved in computer security, do not even register with the Employment Service, whose clientele tends to lack the training they require, says Aviva Gatt, a human resource manager with the firm.

In fact, Gatt maintains that high national unemployment has "nothing to do with us."

"The only way it affects us is that we get more people responding to our newspaper advertisements who are desperate for work but completely unqualified," she says.

The high-tech companies tend to rely on word-of-mouth or universities to recruit workers.

"For us, today, it is getting

Shula's son, who is unemployed, faces IDF recruitment only in the spring. Every day he goes out looking for work and comes back with nothing. He asks me why should he go to the army and serve the country if the country has nothing to offer him in return'

harder, not easier to find qualified applicants. There are more and more start-ups and more competition for candidates. Even companies like Scitex, which were struggling a few years ago are back on their feet and hiring," Gatt says.

To work in the high-tech and computer field, higher education is a must. The enrichment courses offered high-school graduates by the government are not enough training.

"We take people without experience, but the people who attend these courses usually don't even have an educational base we can build on," says Gatt. "We tried interviewing these people a few

times, but when we saw their limitations, we gave up."

For many in Or Akiva who will never even get a foot in the door at a company like Nice, the only other option may be an endless wait at the unemployment office or the cafe.

Unemployment casts a shadow over every aspect of life in a community, and plays a role in pushing up crime rates, experts say. The unemployed in Or Akiva are only too familiar with the syndrome.

"People don't have anything to do: they are bored, so they steal," says Shula. "There are also many, many single mothers here. A lot of marriages fall apart because of economic pressures."

Others turn to drug abuse, to dull the senses. Shula points to a man sitting in a cafe, in a kippa and a white robe, who smells of alcohol. "He's from a good family, but uses drugs from morning till night," while collecting unemployment benefits, she asserts.

The clerks at the employment bureau say that while they know it seems unfair, alcoholics and drug addicts tend to have the easiest time collecting benefits, since they are rarely sent for job interviews.

In order to stay on good terms with potential employers, the clerks don't send over candidates they are certain won't be able to do a job. When they smell alcohol on someone's breath or see dilated pupils, they just hand over benefits, without trying to encourage the person to find a job.

Even a former rich source of employment for Or Akiva — the neighboring mansions of Caesarea — are no longer an option for many.

Eli, a cafe denizen, says that "once, we would go to Caesarea and work as gardeners, as housekeepers, as nannies. Now, even that connection is gone. All of them have workers from the Philippines, from Thailand. There is no communication between us, and, more importantly, there are fewer jobs."

The unemployment cycle

While unemployment has reached its highest level in nearly four years, the situation is not as bad as it was earlier in the decade.

Unemployment stood at 8.6 percent in the first quarter of 1992, when hundreds of thousands of immigrants from the former Soviet Union had just arrived. In the months following that peak, the jobless rate dropped despite the continued growth in the population. The largest decline, 1.2%, or 23,000 fewer unemployed, occurred in the last three months of 1993.

From then until June 1996, unemployment continued to decline, reaching a low of 6.5%. However, since the Netanyahu government came to power, the trend has been reversed, with a steady increase up to the present 8.1%.

Those on the political Right contend that the reduction in unemployment under Labor was matched by irresponsible fiscal policy which led to a huge budget deficit, while those on the Left and in centrist parties see the current jump in unemployment as a sign of the lack of caring in government ranks toward the workers.

The trends in the early '90s can be completely explained by

the entry into the market of the "Russian immigrants," according to Hebrew University public finance professor Eytan Sheshinski, who pointed out that within two years of immigration, most Russians found work.

The economy boomed its way through the early and mid-'90s with annual growth rates of 6.7% in part because of the influx of highly educated labor. The other key development in the job market in recent years has been the replacement of the Palestinian workforce with foreign laborers — neither of whom are included in the Central Bureau of Statistics' unemployment figures.

Many economists today believe that these two categories largely cancel each other out. However, the presence of some 100,000 non-Israeli workers on the market has an impact on job availability — at least in the low-tech areas.

Planning economist at the Labor and Social Affairs Ministry Benny Pfefferman does not accept the argument that Israelis are unwilling to work at manual labor currently done by foreign workers. He is concerned that "employers are keen to keep foreign workers for economic reasons." In other words, Israeli

labor comes at a higher price.

The drop in employment, said Sheshinski, was caused by high interest rates and a tight rein on public expenditure including sizable budget cuts. This combination "has had a negative effect on the growth rate of the economy, on investments and subsequently on employment," said Sheshinski.

While he forecasts "more of the same" in 1998 — no drop in unemployment and no sizable increase in growth —

International Monetary Fund first deputy managing director Stanley Fischer sees the future in a different light. During a visit here this week, he asserted that Israel's recent economic decline has largely bottomed out and as long as the Bank of Israel sticks to its tight monetary policy and the government prevents public spending excesses, things can only look up.

Fischer's positive outlook is shared by many government officials and civil servants. But Sheshinski's and Pfefferman's more somber view, particularly concerning employment, reflects that of the wider business and economic community. "While it's only an estimate, I believe unemployment will average 8.5% in 1998," said Pfefferman.

—David Harris

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Is Bibi good for the Arabs?

After last winter's floods left much of the Israeli Arab town of Kalansuwa neck-deep in water, Tourism Minister Moshe Katsav visited and pledged the town had seen its last flood. Since then, the Netanyahu government has invested NIS 22 million in flood control and repairs.

Last month the prime minister personally laid the cornerstone for the flood-control channel, and Deputy Mayor Ibrahim Kadi says Kalansuwa, which lies next to the Green Line, about a 15-minute drive north from Kfar Sava, is ready for this season's rains.

"On this matter, the government has kept its promise," Kadi says. "On everything else, it's been a disappointment - just like every other government before. For Kalansuwa, for the whole Israeli Arab sector, the Netanyahu government is no better, no worse."

But in Nazareth, the largest Israeli Arab city, the quality of life

Israeli Arabs are worse off under the Netanyahu government than they were under the Labor-Peres one, according to a new report.

Larry Derfner explores the situation in Kalansuwa

just to get somebody in this government to listen to us."

Sikkuy, one of the country's leading organizations promoting Israeli Arab equality, has just published its survey of the Netanyahu government's treatment of the country's Arab sector. Its conclusions lie closer to the account presented in Nazareth than to the one offered in Kalansuwa.

"This government gives the Arab population secondary importance," says Dr. As'ad Ghanem, a Haifa University political scientist and co-director of Sikkuy with Alouph Harven. "They've shown no interest in solving problems."

The reason for the government's neglect, Ghanem maintains, is political. "Ninety-five percent of Israeli Arabs voted for [Shimon] Peres. A Likud Knesset member [whom Ghanem did not name] told me as much. He said they had no expectations of winning Arab votes, so why should they do anything for the Arabs?"

The government denies these charges wholeheartedly. In a written response contained in the Sikkuy report, Motti Zaken, Arab affairs adviser to the prime minister, contends that "despite the drastic cut of NIS 7 billion in the state budget, the government made sure not to reduce the budgets allocated for the Arab population. While the budget cuts affected [Jewish or mainly Jewish] municipalities, budgets were not cut to local Arab councils."

Zaken says the government's policy is guided by the principle that resources must be provided to the Arab sector for the sake of "closing gaps in the spirit of equality." Despite the budget cuts instituted by the current government, it has spent as much money on building new classrooms in the Arab sector this year as the Peres government spent in its final year in office, Zaken notes. Among the government's other accomplishments, he points out the "Computer for Every

Child" program, which is slated to provide PCs to 20,000 Israeli Arab pupils over the next five years.

Zaken also places part of the blame for conditions on the local Arab municipalities themselves. "The source of some of the problems in the Israeli Arab sector are internal, such as inefficient management by the municipalities, the involvement of local clans in management decisions, and the failure to fulfill agreements on the rotation of local leadership. These factors do not contribute, to say the least, to improving the condition of the Arab population in Israel." However, the report, sponsored in large part by the Abraham Fund, asserts that "overall, during the first year of the present government, the process of closing gaps of inequality and of integration has been brought to a halt in most areas."

The most damaging change, says Ghanem, was the withdrawal of development priority status to Israeli Arab municipalities, which had an across-the-board effect on funding for local improvements.

For instance, Kalansuwa got money from the Housing Ministry two years ago for construction of a new community center, but the funding stopped last year and the center stands uncompleted. Extensive road construction was undertaken in the town by the previous government, but this, too, has stopped, says Kadi, noting that the inactivity of the Housing Ministry is the one area in which Kalansuwa feels a change for the worse under the Netanyahu government.

However, Sikkuy found certain areas in which the current government has made progress in comparison with its predecessor. The Interior Ministry did increase budgets to Arab local authorities by NIS 150 million over a three-year

period.

Infrastructure Minister Ariel Sharon was cited for showing awareness of the need to improve conditions for Negev Beduin. Science Minister Benny Begin, who resigned from the Netanyahu government, was lauded for insisting on hiring more Arab scientists in colleges and universities.

But beyond the Netanyahu government's performance on bread-and-butter issues, it was faulted by Sikkuy for being much less accessible to local Arab officials than the Rabin-Peres administration.

This was a key complaint cited by 25 Arab municipal officials interviewed for the report. "Human relations are important, too," noted Jersey.

Here again, though, Zaken takes exception to the findings, noting that government emissaries, himself included, acted as peacemakers in violent clan disputes in such villages as Tuba and Turan.

'While the NIS 7 billion in budget cuts affected [Jewish or mainly Jewish] municipalities, budgets were not cut to local Arab councils'

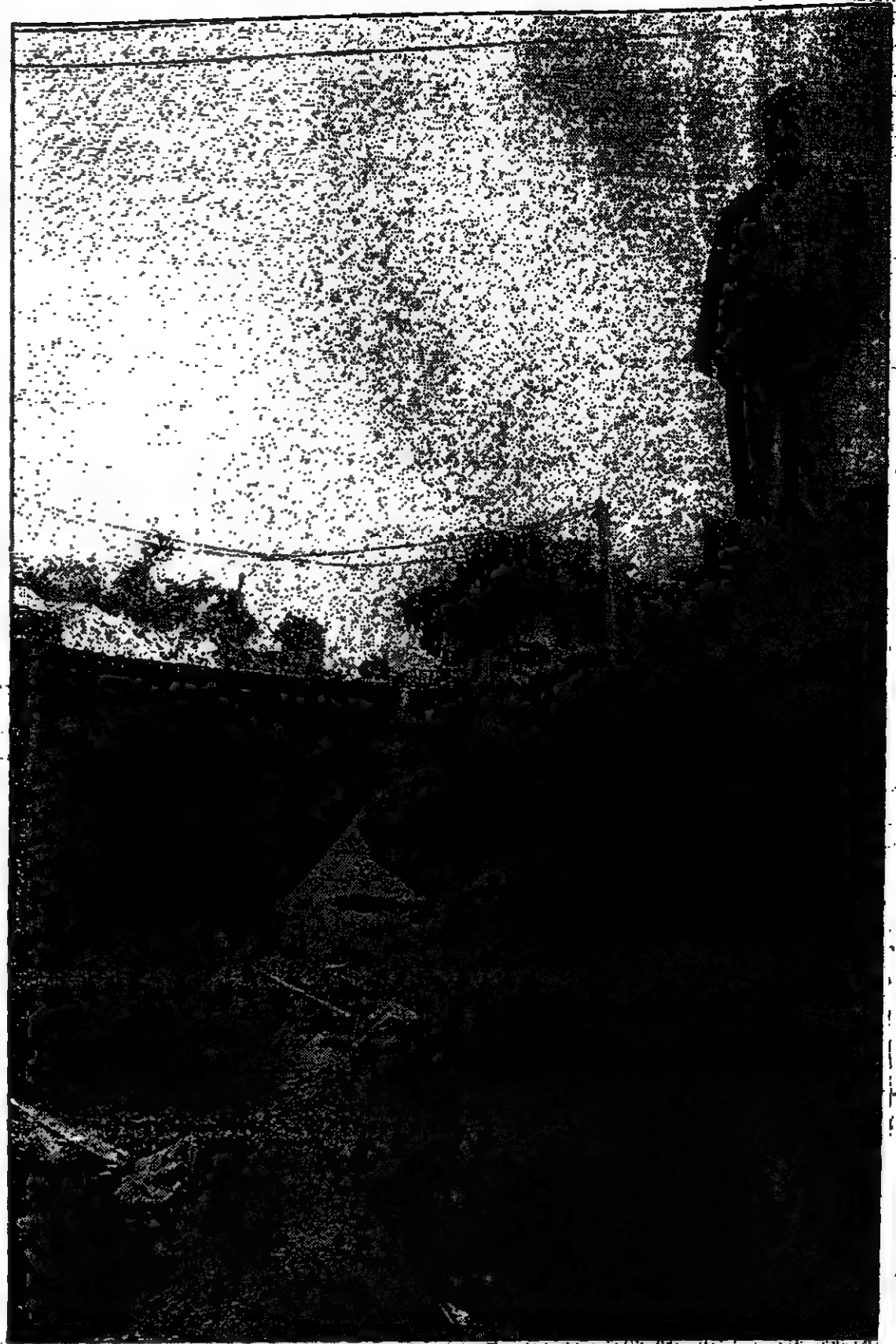
- Motti Zaken, Arab affairs adviser to the prime minister

In Sikkuy's 1996 report, the local Arab officials graded most government ministries "very good" to "medium." In their responses for the current report, "almost all ministries were accorded low marks. The exceptions were the Interior, Education and Labor and Social Affairs ministries," the report found.

Significantly, Sikkuy found that in many critical areas, Israeli Arabs had never received a fair shake - not under the Rabin-Peres government, not under its predecessors, and not under the Netanyahu regime.

For instance, the Religious Affairs Ministry affords Moslems, Christians and Druze 2 percent of its budget, even though these groups make up 19% of Israel's population - a continuation of a historic injustice, according to the report.

Another unsolved matter, Sikkuy notes, is that "in most government ministries in Jerusalem, as well as the president's office,



Deputy Mayor Ibrahim Kadi stands over the flood-control channel built by the Netanyahu government. "On this matter the government has kept its promise. On everything else, it's been a disappointment - just like every other government before," he says. (Jonathan Bloom)

there are no Arab civil servants." "People say things were so good for the Israeli Arabs during the Rabin-Peres government, but it's just a slogan," contends Kadi. "There were some improvements,

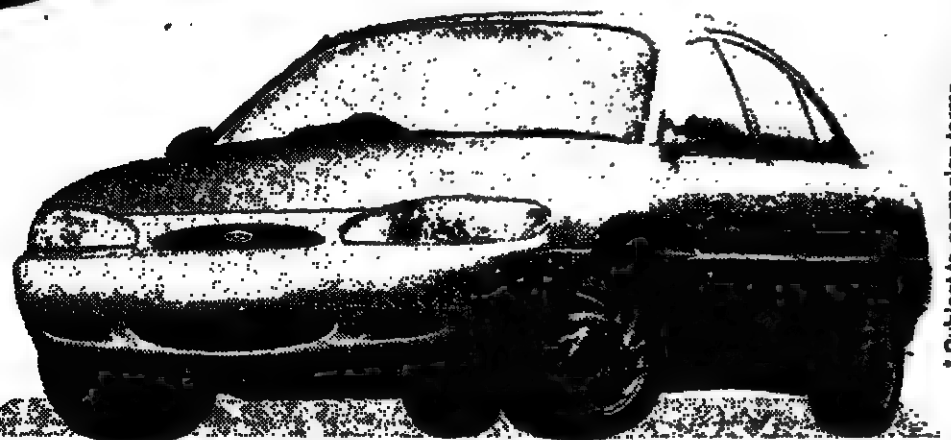
but not like people think. Now the current government is building this flood channel, but it should have been built decades ago. [Former prime minister Yitzhak] Shamir came here and promised to help. Rabin and Peres promised to help, but nobody did anything. As far as I'm concerned, every Israeli government has been a disappointment for us."

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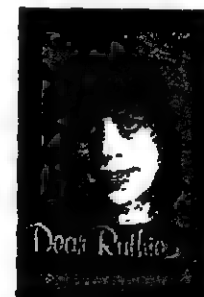
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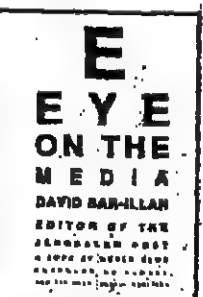
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MIDDLE ISRAEL



By AMOTZ ASA-EL

Has it been 50 years?

Having been served a scarce bowl of water while roaming the desert with his disciples, Confucius abruptly flipped the dish and let its contents spill onto the arid ground.

"Too much for one," explained the timeless Chinese philosopher, "too little for all."

FIFTY YEARS ago this weekend a hitherto humiliated and desperate Jewish people finally smelled the intoxicating scent of national euphoria, following the UN's adoption of the Partition Plan. Already then, there were all too many Arabs and Jews who, like Confucius in his situation, were convinced that this land was too little to be shared by all its would-be inhabitants.

Since then, the demographic, economic and political assumptions harbored by partition's opponents - whether Arab, Jewish or

British - have been proven wrong. When it was first proposed, in 1937, partition immediately stirred sharp emotions and brought together such unlikely bedfellows as Chief Rabbi Isaac Herzog and fiercely secularist Ze'ev Jabotinsky, or arch-socialist Berl Katznelson and American plutocrat Felix Warburg. And yet history has vindicated partition's supporters.

First, since the days when Britain used - or abused - demographic capacity as an excuse for curtailing immigration, this land has become home to some 11 million people on both sides of the Jordan, and clearly there is plenty of room for more.

Secondly - in contrast to pre-statehood conventional wisdom - the wealth of a nation has been proven to be determined not by the amount of its cultivable land but by the acumen of its workforce.

And thirdly, had partition been implemented in 1937, there would have at least been one state, albeit minuscule and fledgling, where the Holocaust's ultimate victims would have been welcome.

Indeed, the Arab-Israeli conflict has time and again shown that those who fail to compromise in the spirit of partition ultimately

end up in history's dustbin. The Arabs' failure to accept the 1917 Balfour Declaration, which stopped short of granting the Jews a sovereign state, ultimately resulted in the 1937 plan which proposed to give them one.

Ten years later, the Arab failure to accept the British partition scheme resulted in the approval of the famous UN partition plan which was even less favorable to the Palestinians, and resulted in a disastrous military defeat and national displacement.

Finally, the Palestinian refusal to join the Camp David process in 1978 resulted in the massive settlement drive of the early 1980s, which the PA now so loudly laments.

Syria, too, marginalized itself, first by failing to join the Camp David process, then by procrastinating even in the face of Yitzhak Rabin's and Shimon Peres's exceptionally conciliatory attitudes.

And then there was Golda Meir, who turned down Anwar Sadat's peace proposals and ended up meeting him on the battlefield.

THESE unequivocally negative consequences of non-compromise cannot automatically dictate a peace-in-out-time sort of blind

appeasement à la Neville Chamberlain. However, two generations after our founding fathers' prudent choice to firmly pursue the attainable rather than faintly grasp the illusive, some of us and our interlocutors still fail to fathom the consequences of abandoning that legacy.

Half a century after partition's shining victory, as both sides weigh the cost, pace and magnitude of further redeployment, the field is still rife with *sacro-egoismo* fanatics who fail to realize the needs, not to mention the rights, of their neighbors.

Sometimes they like to compare the land-for-peace mind frame with King Solomon's famous trial, where the mother who agreed to partition the disputed baby emerged as the impersonator.

It's time they all realized that the living organism in this analogy is not the land, but the people - of whatever faith and nationality - who dwell upon it; that the true mother in Solomon's trial was the one willing to compromise her maternal "sovereignty," so that human life would not be lost.

It's been 50 years now since Arab rioters protesting the Partition Resolution set Jewish stores ablaze in the Mamilla

neighborhood, which until then was Jerusalem's commercial center. Now a mammoth construction site, sprawling from the Old City's walls to the fringes of the King David Hotel, the area is bound to emerge as a major regional landmark, replete with luxury apartments, first-class hotels, theater complexes, shopping centers, and a glitzy pedestrian mall.

Beyond this real-estate project lurks a vision which not only resurrects a major feature of Mandatory Jerusalem, but also linchpins the capital's Arab and Jewish halves, while gently luring Isaac and Ishmael to share a common ground.

Strolling through Mamilla the other day, I listened to the echoes of the carnage which swept through it in 1947 and gazed into the flames which uprooted its many businesses until this very day.

Like a parting sea, Jaffa Gate shouldered a lively throng of tourists on its right, while Damascus Gate resounded with the crackling gunfire of yet another terrorist attack on my left.

Five decades on, that Confucian everything-or-nothing pessimism is still locking horns with partition's subdued pragmatism. How banal.

Dry Bones



A VIEW FROM NOV



By MOSHE KOHN

'Vanity Fair' and 'the Arafat way'

A charitable view of the unremitting Israel-bashing by most of the mass media and other keepers of the cosmic conscience is that it does not stem from an anti-Israel attitude but rather from the perception that the Jews of Eretz Yisrael are now sword-wielding Goliath the bully and our Palestinian Authority (PA) ostensible peace partners are little, slingshot-swinging David the lyrical.

That great Israeli humorist Ephraim Kishon, long ago explained how Israel lost the sympathy of the world by stubbornly refusing to let the Arabs defeat us.

We have even been told that we have humiliated them by our repeated victories and our unashamed standing fast in general - standing fast, that is, until our surrender of Sinai and especially the grotesque, and even more grotesquely implemented, Oslo Accords.

There is really little if any ground for this forgiving view of the blatant, malicious, often stupid distortions of fact and emphasis that pervade most of the media's coverage of Middle Eastern affairs, especially regarding Israel and its Jews. Following is a blatant example of this malicious stupidity.

The November issue of the left-chic *Vanity Fair* magazine features "A portrait of world power: The 65 men and women who shape and rule the world," with concise biographies of each. The list includes

Binyamin Netanyahu and Yasser Arafat. The magazine gives a rather straightforward outline of Arafat's career. It notes that in 1949 he "was admitted to the University of Texas," but while waiting for a visa changed his mind and decided to study engineering in Cairo. This "was the beginning of his involvement in the Palestinian cause."

It continues: "Revolution is Arafat's second career. After taking an engineering degree, he built a fortune in the Kuwaiti construction business. It became the foundation of his political and military struggles."

Under the Oslo Accords of 1993, "Arafat assumed leadership of Arabs within Israel's occupied territories. His 1993 handshake with Yitzhak Rabin [on the White House lawn in September 1993] brought to a close Arafat's fugitive life..."

Arafat has a human side: He "breaks from his responsibilities by watching cartoons. His favorites: *Bugs Bunny*, *Roadrunner*, and *Tom and Jerry*."

Finally, "Of his enduring and distinctive look, he has said: 'I like to dress the Arafat way!'"

Netanyahu is another matter: here *Vanity Fair* storms again. It tells us that he earned an M.Sc. degree at MIT, but as far as it is concerned he has had no careers - neither first nor second nor third. He is merely "well known for his performances on *Nightline* and *CNN*." Note well: "performances," such as clowns do, not "appearances," as what diplomats, spokesmen and statesmen do.

There is, of course, no mention of Arafat's gun-toting and provocative "performances" at the UN and other occasions.

Netanyahu is "equally well known by Israelis for 'Bibigate,' wherein he confessed to marital infidelity on prime-time television..." If this is an important part of the

concise biography of the Israeli prime minister, why aren't we told about the reported sexual escapades of his "Palestinian" opposite number?

Furthermore, Netanyahu "has steadfastly rejected a land-for-peace bargain with the Palestinians, the backbone of the Oslo peace accords." This is an outright lie, as attested by our moving out of most of Hebron early this year. Moreover, not only did that move not come in the wake of peace, as implied in the alleged "land-for-peace" formula, but since that redeployment we have not received much peace or much of anything else in return.

Vanity Fair tells us that "in the wake of [Netanyahu's] hard-line stance, there has been much carnage." It is, of course, only Israel's insistence on reciprocity that everybody characterizes as "hard-line." The Arafatians' insistence on what they claim as their "legitimate rights" is never "hard-line."

Now comes the height of the magazine's malicious ignorance. The first item in that carnage list is "spring 1996: three terrorist bombings in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv [that] left 58 dead."

It is only in the topsy-turvy Israel-bashing world that anything Netanyahu said or did could be held even remotely responsible for those outrages.

Those bombings occurred in late February and early March, during Shimon Peres's tenure as prime minister, some three months before Netanyahu was elected on May 29.

In connection with those and the many earlier murders by Arabs of innocent Jewish children, women and men, as well as innocent Arab and other non-Jewish bystanders, minimal honesty by *Vanity Fair* would have impelled them to point out that Arafat's "political and military struggles" have consisted largely of sending out mur-

der gangs to commit massacres in civilian concentrations here and abroad, and even today includes turning a blind eye to similar massacres committed by Arabs. It also includes steady support of the Butcher of Baghdad, Saddam Hussein, in his campaign against civilization.

Finally, as far as *Vanity Fair* is concerned, the Hamas murder organization is merely a "militant Moslem group."

There is nothing about Netanyahu's pastimes or sartorial preferences.

I see nothing innocent in *Vanity Fair*'s performance here, nothing that can be attributed to an honest difference in "perception."

(Thanks to David P. Sietmann of New York City for responding to my request for the *Vanity Fair* texts.)

THEN THERE is the veteran Zionism-and-Israel-bashing, racist *New York Times*. According to that newspaper's news editor, William Borders, "torture by Israel, a democratic ally of the United States, which gets huge support from [the US], is news. Torture by Palestinians seems less surprising. Surely you don't consider the two authorities morally equivalent."

That is what he wrote to a reader, Sherman G. Miller, of Longwood, Florida, who complained about the newspaper's "uneven and double standard" in its Middle Eastern coverage.

Miller singled out several articles by the *Times*'s Jerusalem correspondent, Sergio Schmemmann, regarding charges of torture carried out by Israel and the Palestinian Authority.

(Thanks to Leah Green of the Boston-based CAMERA/Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting in America.)

E-mail comments to: moshe@post.co.il. Please include home address.

SHABBAT SHALOM



By SHLOMO GOREN

Union of opposites

"And Isaac entrusted God for his wife, because she was barren..." (Gen. 25:21)

After many years of barrenness, Mother Rebecca has become pregnant, but her pregnancy causes her great pain: "And the children struggled [lit. ran] within her, and she said: 'If it be so, wherefore do I live?' And she went to inquire of God. And God said unto her: 'Two nations are in thy womb, and two peoples shall be separated from your bowels...' (Gen. 25:22)

How does God's answer address Rebecca's condition? How does the Divine response provide any comfort? If anything, God only confirms an ongoing battle between the two opposing ideological concepts and powers to whom she is about to give life. The Divine response should have only intensified her anguish.

Rashi cites the Midrash, which adds graphic imagery to Rebecca's discomfort. The Hebrew word *veiytorzeru* (usually translated as "struggled") is constructed from the word *tzur* (running); hence our Sages pictured a situation in which whenever Rebecca passed a house of Torah study, Jacob moved convulsively in order to emerge, and when she passed a house of idolatry, Esau moved convulsively in order to emerge.

It is on this basis that a hassidic interpretation told in the name of Rabbi Haim Tazner describes the dilemma of Rebecca.

She thought she was bearing a single child and therefore couldn't understand the jostling inside her womb: one day the fetus was lunging toward a house of worship, and the next it was jerking and twitching in its attempt to emerge when she passed a house of idolatry.

Was she about to give birth to a biblical Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde? If such was the case, she didn't want to live. The heir to the majestic tradition of Abraham and Isaac can hardly be a schizophrenic who doesn't know what he wants or where he belongs!

Disturbed by such a dilemma, God's answer is genuinely consoling. There are twins, two different individuals, in her womb, and one of them, albeit the younger, is already attracted to God and Torah. He is destined to carry the mantle of Israel.

But the Sages provide another way to understand the meaning of God's answer. Commenting on the words, "Two nations are in thy womb," Rashi illuminates the issues that lie beneath the surface of the text. Our *mesora* (precise biblical textual transmission) records that although the usual biblical word for nations is *goyim* (gimel, vav, yud, mem), in our context it is *gayim* (the vav replaced by a yud), which means "exalted or noble peoples." Thus the text can be taken to mean "Two noble and exalted peoples are in thy womb."

This is a reference, explains Rashi, to Antoninus (Marcus Aurelius, emperor of Rome and stoic philosopher) and Rabbi (Rabbi Judah the Prince, author of the Mishna) "...from whose table neither radish nor lettuce was absent, not during the period of

heat and not during the period of cold."

What is the Midrash teaching? And what is the significance of the radishes and lettuce?

Obviously, we are being told that they ate vegetables together, because the Roman emperor did not keep a kosher kitchen, so meat was out of bounds for Rabbi. But our Sages go a step further when they add that the radishes and lettuce never left the table despite the presence of rain or the lack thereof. This must contain an important message.

Rabbi Shlomo Goren, former chief rabbi of Israel and chief chaplain of the Israel Defense Forces, provides the clue by linking this midrash with another talmudic tradition which reports that during a significant portion of Rabbi's life, the world didn't require rain.

Vegetation was so plentiful despite the lack of a downpour that if someone dug out a radish from the ground, he would find water under it (B.T. Bava Metzia 85a).

In other words, because of the saintliness of Rabbi (and the great personal pain he suffered at this time of his life), the water from beneath the earth itself was sufficient to sustain agriculture.

This was seen as an expression of Divine beneficence since, although rain is necessary for our survival, there is no denying that in its wake, discomfort and even tragedy can ensue for many people who happen to be in the wrong place at the wrong time.

Hence the symbol of redemption par excellence is a bountiful harvest without the necessity of heavy downpours: radishes and lettuce which are nourished from underground moisture and are therefore plentiful throughout the year.

With this understanding, Rashi's citation of the Midrash makes God's consolation to Rebecca perfectly clear. The Patriarch knew she was carrying twins; but she was desperately unhappy at the thought that they represented divergent ideologies and that her two sons would be at eternal war with each other.

And indeed, Rome and Jerusalem, Esau and Jacob, Christianity and Judaism represent two opposing world-views, with Rome having succeeded in destroying the Holy Temple, in removing Jewish national sovereignty from Israel for close to 2,000 years, and in having forced the descendants of Jacob to wander in exile and persecution over the face of the globe.

The Almighty comforts Rebecca by telling her that the clash between her sons will end in harmony, respect and love.

Just as Rabbi Judah the Prince, great conveyor of the Oral Law, will dine with, teach and, to an extent, learn from Emperor Marcus Aurelius, so Judaism and Christianity will learn to live in peace: "My Temple will be a Temple of Prayer for all nations," in the messianic age.

The two nations will reestablish their brotherhood when "from Zion shall come forth Torah, and the word of God from Jerusalem."

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Syria first, says Egyptian envoy

Egyptian Ambassador Mohammed Bassiouny is not sure whether Azzam Azzam, the Israeli citizen imprisoned in Cairo for espionage, actually worked for the Mossad or any other Israeli intelligence organization, but he is sure that the Druse textile executive was caught carrying material given him by a spy ring operating in Egypt.

The suave envoy, who carefully considers every comment he makes, went a step further in an interview with *The Jerusalem Post*.

"Azzam Azzam may not have known exactly what he was carrying when he was arrested. He was tricked by two Israeli women from Nazareth who were in contact with an Egyptian spy for Israel."

He also charged that Azzam lied in court and he contended that the Cairo authorities "have a videotape and a tape recording" that attest to Azzam's involvement in the spy plot.

Bassiouny did not profess to be fully aware of the details in the Azzam case, but he spoke with certainty when the subject shifted to contemporary Mideast diplomacy.

Syria is the linchpin of the Middle East peace process, he said, and only when its claim to the Golan Heights is accommodated will all of the region's other disputes be laid to rest.

Given Bassiouny's experience, his words merit careful consideration. No foreign diplomat based in Israel, and few contemporary Israeli leaders, can match Bassiouny's history of involvement in the various hot and cold

Mohammed Bassiouny insists that the Syrian track is more important than any other. The Egyptian ambassador spoke to Jay Bushinsky about the peace process and the Azzam Azzam case

Arab-Israeli wars. This includes an eight-year stint in Damascus, during which he coordinated the simultaneous surprise attack by Syria and Egypt against Israel in October 1973.

It was then that Bassiouny got to know President Hafez Assad, garnering a vivid impression of the man's method of reasoning, which always involves domestic political considerations (he is ever aware that he stems from Islam's minority Alawite denomination) and a reluctance to make crucial and binding decisions.

Relating this to the current situation, Bassiouny hinted that no other aspect of the regional peace process can take precedence over the Israeli-Syrian track. Evidently, it is irrelevant to Assad whether the Palestinian Authority's demands are satisfied by Israel fully, partially or not at all. The bottom line, for Assad, is Syria's territorial claim.

Once it is met, Israel's problems in Lebanon would dissolve. Hizbullah would disintegrate, and the peace treaty with Jordan — which Assad deemed premature and contrary to the principle of total Israeli evacuation of territory taken in war — will be accepted by the Jordanian public.

BASSIOUNY RECALLED the



Mohammed Bassiouny: Syria is the linchpin to peace. (David Rubinger)

late American peace envoy Philip Habib's attempt to conclude a separate peace between Israel and Lebanon after the 1982 Lebanon War.

"You can't go for a deal in Lebanon while ignoring Syria," he

said. By the same token, he rejected the idea of a unilateral pullback from the security zone in southern Lebanon, only because it would not be based on an agreement with Syria.

"I do believe that to make a long story short, the best policy is to reach an agreement comprising Lebanon and Syria first," he went on. "Those who said that Philip Habib will take care of Syria afterwards were wrong."

Even so, Bassiouny contends that headway in the bilateral negotiations between Israel and the PA is essential in the larger regional context.

"Without solving the Palestinian problem the Arab-Israeli dispute will continue," he said. "If there is no progress, it means the [Arab] peace camp is wrong and the people opposing peace [like Iran, Libya and Sudan] will be in a strong position."

This evaluation was made with a glance towards the Islamic conference due to open in Teheran next month, an event about which Egypt evidently has mixed feelings. The ambassador said that although Egypt will attend, "the level of representation will be determined by President Hosni Mubarak."

The Teheran conclave is center stage, however, in terms of regional and especially American diplomacy.

"That is why the US is pushing hard to achieve progress," he went on. "It wants to shore up the area's stability. This is a common American and European interest."

THE NAGGING feeling that Egypt's attitudes can never be totally discerned persisted throughout Bassiouny's analysis.

He conceded that the Cairo government maintains correct diplomatic relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran despite the upsurge of Islamic extremist activity in Egypt.

He did, however, remark that "We are not against the people of Iran," using the word "people," not "regime." "We hope they will join us in the camp of peace and join us in the fight against terror."

That was as far as Bassiouny would go on the record, leaving his interviewers hanging with the Hebrew saying, "Hameivin yavin" — "He who understands will understand."

HIS ATTITUDE toward Iraq reflects the traditional notion of Arab unity and solidarity. Egypt's consent to join the US in the military coalition that fought President Saddam Hussein's regime in the Gulf War was based exclusively on one factor which does not apply to the current crisis.

"Iraq invaded an Arab country [Kuwait, in 1990]," he said. "We oppose any Arab country violating the territory of any other."

He went on to expand the scope of the United Nations' and the US's concern about Iraq's development and stockpiling of weapons of mass destruction, but coupled it with an unmistakable reference to Israel.

"The Egyptian strategy is that the entire area should be cleared of all unconventional weapons," he said. He favors regional arms control, which would bar biological, chemical and nuclear weapons.

Asked about Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov's role in dissipating the tension with Iraq, Bassiouny cited Moscow's status as co-chairman of the Madrid Conference on Middle East peace and welcomed Russia's transformation into an agent of cooperation, in contrast to the former USSR's role as a catalyst for conflict.

Bassiouny minimized the significance of the armed Islamic elements running amok in Egypt, indiscriminately murdering foreign tourists, policemen and others.

"The majority of Egypt's people is religious, but not fanatical," he said. "Egyptians are religious by nature. Cairo is the seat of al-Azhar, Islam's supreme theological institution."

"But these terrorists do not represent Islam. They know nothing about Islam. Islam does not advocate murder. Islam teaches that if you kill innocent people it is as if you killed a whole world."

"They are a very small group. They cannot bring us [the Egyptian government] down. The overwhelming majority of Egyptians know their interpretation of Islam is wrong." When Bassiouny was reminded that these religious extremists assassinated President Anwar Sadat 16 years ago, he paused momentarily, weighed the implications and concluded that the deed did not deter Egypt from the road to peace which it paved, nor did it deter Egypt from moving forward along that road.

What about antisemitic articles and cartoons in the Egyptian press? What about the boycott maintained by Egyptian professional associations against Israel? Bassiouny insisted that these were protests against Israel's policies, not against the concept of peace with Israel.

"The overwhelming majority of Egyptians favor peace and abhor bloodshed," he said. "This was demonstrated by the massive welcome home given Sadat when he returned from his historic peace mission to Jerusalem."

GRAPEVINE

By GREER FAY CASHMAN



Irish roots: Yitzhak Herzog visits the Herzog family wing of Dublin's Jewish Museum.

In his father's footsteps

November, which is a very significant month in contemporary Jewish history, has proved even more so for Tel Aviv lawyer Yitzhak Herzog, who has been attending memorial dedications for his father, Israel's sixth president, Chaim Herzog. Early in the month, he went to Dublin, his father's birthplace, for the dedication at the 407-year-old Trinity College of The Chaim Herzog Center for Jewish and Near Eastern Cultural Studies.

The ceremony coincided with the college's 250th anniversary of teaching Hebrew. The Herzog Center includes documented records of the Herzog family's strong connections with Ireland, as well as the Jacob Weingreen chair of Jewish studies. An Irish Jew, Weingreen was an eminent scholar. Some of Chaim Herzog's boyhood friends, such as Judge Herbert Wine, gave Yitzhak Herzog the warmest of greetings.

The young Herzog met with men who had gone to school with his father at Wesley College; he visited Herzog Park, which was inaugurated in 1996; and the Adelaide Synagogue where his grandfather had given sermons and his father had celebrated his bar mitzva. He also visited the Jewish Museum, inaugurated in 1985 during his father's state visit, and was delighted to see that it contains a whole wing devoted to the Herzog family.

With oratory in his genes, it was only natural that he should address the Ireland-Israel Chamber of Commerce. In this and other addresses, he noted that November 1917 had witnessed both the Balfour Declaration and the first steps in Ireland of a young rabbi named Isaac Herzog. Now, his grandson, a citizen of the sovereign state of Israel, was speaking to people who had been in audiences addressed by both Isaac and Chaim Herzog.

Before leaving Dublin, the younger Herzog went to Bloomfield Avenue, the site of the Herzog family home, which has been purchased by Paul Gillespie, editor of *The Irish Times* and his wife, Deirdre, who had been in correspondence with Chaim Herzog and were delighted to host his son. This week, Yitzhak Herzog, together with members of his family, was in Kfar Sava for the dedication of the Chaim Herzog High School.

"I UNDERSTAND that Yehoshua didn't help you. He was too busy with the primaries," quipped Internal Security Minister Avigdor Kahalani to Rachel Matza, chairperson of the Jerusalem Friends of Yad Beyad at the organization's annual gala dinner dance at the Hyatt Regency Hotel to raise money for homes for economically disadvantaged children.

Speaking only partially in jest, Kahalani said that he comes to Jerusalem every day but is never quite sure whether he still has a job. The function, under the patronage of Greek Ambassador Sotirios Varouxakis, had a distinct Greek flavor to it. The ouzo on the tables eased merrymakers into the mood for Greek dancing to music by Theodorakis. Varouxakis led Yad Beyad founder Shelly Hoshen and Tilva Mizrahi, head of the Jerusalem branch of Yad Beyad, in a spirited dance after which, at her request, he taught the steps to Dahlia Kahalani.

Varouxakis, who had to fly to Greece the next morning, didn't stay till the end, so he missed out on Zabava Ben, who came at the winking hour and sang well into the wee small hours.

WHEN Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai received an invitation from the Tel Aviv-Jaffa municipality to be the guest of honor at Gan Oranin at the 42nd annual gathering of armored corps officers and veterans, he didn't realize that the occasion would also be a surprise party to celebrate his 54th birth-

day. Among the well-wishers were Mordechai's wife of a few weeks, Kochi, General Uzi Dayan, reserve generals Moshe Peled, Yanush Ben-Gal and Yossi Ben-Hanan, and Avigdor Kahalani, a legendary military hero and one of the most highly decorated officers in the corps.

INITIALLY touted as the person most likely to replace Avigdor Lieberman — who resigned this week as director-general of the Prime Minister's Office — Moshe Leon has at least one advantage over Lieberman: a cantorial talent. He displayed this skill on his first visit to Thessalonika, his father's home town. Leon arrived there last Friday with his father for the unveiling of a monument erected by the Greek government to the Jews of that city murdered in the Holocaust. He spent Shabbat with the community's rabbi, Yitzhak



Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai cuts the cake with well-wishers on his 54th birthday.

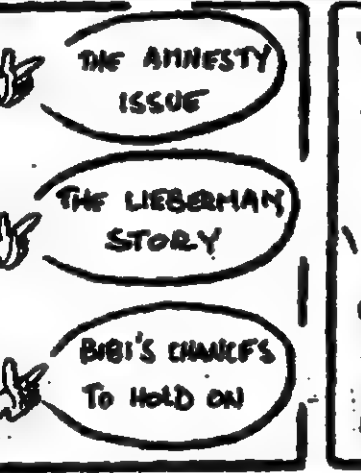
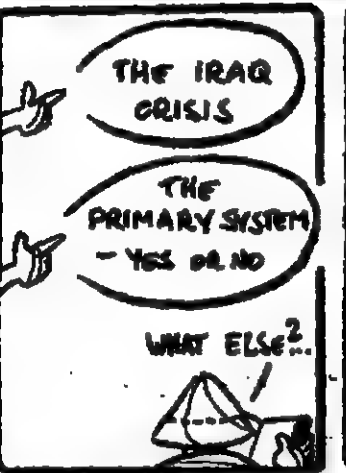
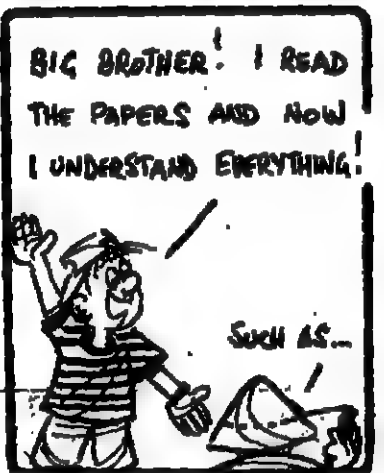
Dayan, and took the opportunity to entertain local Jews with some of his cantorial repertoire.

YOUNG admirers and old friends swarmed around former MK Marcia Freedman at the coalition of women's organizations protest demonstration and march on International Day Against Violence Against Women. Freedman, who two decades ago was instrumental in setting up the country's first shelter for battered women in Haifa, and had passionately advocated for free abortions, now divides her time between Jerusalem and Berkeley. Debbie Gross, director of the Crisis Center for Religious Women, also participated in the march, as did a few boys from Bnei Akiva. The most practical marchers were the WIZO women, whose slogans were emblazoned on umbrellas which protected them from the occasional drops of rain.

ISRAEL'S ambassador to Egypt, Zvi Mazel, and his wife, Michelle, this week attended the inauguration of a library in the compound of Cairo's famed Ben-Ezra Synagogue. The project, under the auspices of the local Jewish community, was funded by the Israeli Academic Center. Several Egyptian dignitaries attended, including representatives of the Foreign Ministry and the Antiquities Department. Also present were Canadian ambassador to Egypt, Michael Bell, some junior diplomats from the US embassy, a few American Jewish students, and 30 senior members of Cairo Jewry for whom the establishment of the library was a visibly emotional experience. After the formalities, guests feasted on a book-shaped cake, literally gobbling up the volume.

IT'S wedding bells for Men in Black star Will Smith, 29, and Jada Pinkett, 26. The couple, who are expecting their first child, have announced plans to wed before the year is out. It will be the first time around for her, Smith, who is divorced, has a five-year-old son from his previous marriage.

SRULIK



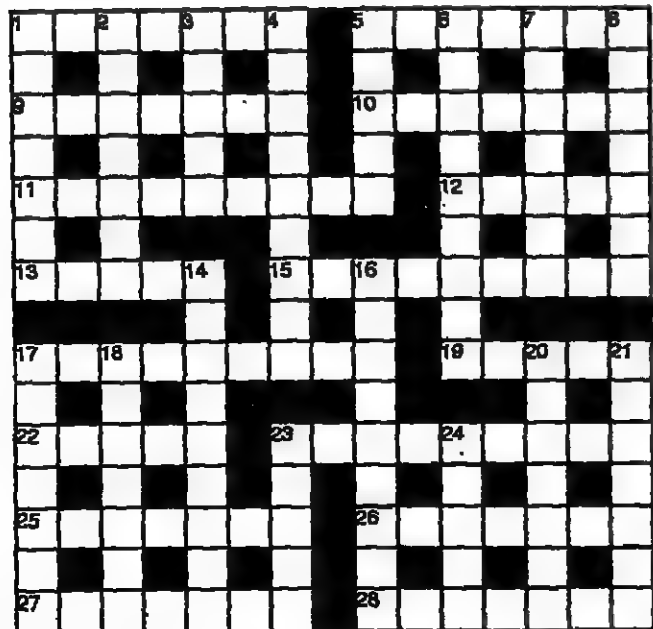
CRYPTIC CROSSWORD

ACROSS

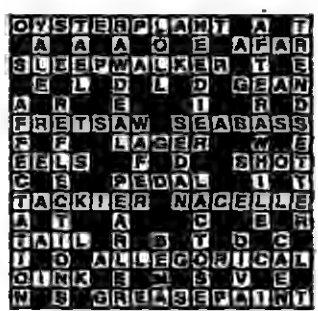
- 1 He takes stock (7)
- 5 Topping Persian fairy to sword (7)
- 8 Sessions of drinks around North Dakota (7)
- 10 A paper pattern length for dress (7)
- 11 Indolent workers Satan finds mischief for (4,5)
- 12 Opted to have many pairs of stockings (5)
- 13 To pronounce about craft is impertinent (5)
- 15 Its team members are not allowed to play in the penalty-box (3,6)
- 17 Invert sugar added to a spring vegetable (9)
- 19 An area of low rainfall is in a bad state (5)

DOWN

- 2 Is about to study pictures (5)
- 3 Harry goes after dollar dog (9)
- 25 Instrument for aria NCO arranged (7)
- 26 Former prince taking a province (7)
- 27 Plainly smart about status (7)
- 28 Gossips with stories about island race (7)
- 1 Trying members of the courts (7)
- 2 Tickets for a Wimbledon match maybe (7)
- 3 General chief physician of old (5)
- 4 Being displeased about note sent, telephone (9)



SOLUTIONS



Yesterday's Quick Solution
ACROSS: 1 Suite, 4 Torque, 5 Transit, 10 Grave, 11 Rays, 12 Charlot, 13 Oak, 14 Camp, 16 Dye, 18 Has, 20 Optimal, 21 Idle, 24 Stern, 25 Langue, 26 Eleven, 27 Green.
DOWN: 1 Suite, 2 Baby, 3 Elm, 5 Orchestra, 6 Quail, 7 Events, 8 Stack, 12 Opulence, 16 Achille, 17 Mouse, 18 Habit, 19 Demure, 22 Drive, 23 Gang.

QUICK CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- 1 Church official (6)
- 4 Supports (5)
- 7 Extras (9)
- 9 Failing (4)
- 10 Moist (4)
- 11 At no time (5)
- 13 Linger (6)
- 14 Lecturer (6)
- 15 Dismal (6)
- 17 — up, have the low-down (6)
- 19 Female oracle (5)
- 20 Somerset city (4)
- 22 Only time (4)
- 23 Presuming (9)
- 24 Pass (5)
- 25 Distress call (6)

DOWN

- 1 Rubbish (6)
- 2 Yield (4)
- 3 Fixer? (6)
- 4 Tiny slice (6)
- 5 Crust (4)
- 6 Late meal (6)
- 7 Mishaps (9)
- 8 Making one miserable (9)
- 11 Closes (5)
- 12 Put off (5)
- 15 Do, in a trifling way (5)
- 16 Horrible (6)
- 17 Plaster (6)
- 18 Dishy! (6)
- 21 A camel has one (4)
- 22 Sole (4)

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Course	Hours	Tel Aviv Center		Jerusalem Center	
		Start date	End date	Start date	End date
TECHNICAL WRITING (morning session)	33	Sun., Tue., Thur., 9 a.m. - 12 noon	Feb. 26	Sun., Tue., Thur., 9 a.m. - 12 noon	Dec. 14
TECHNICAL WRITING (evening session)	33	Sun., Tue., Thur., 6 p.m. - 9 p.m.	Feb. 26	Sun., Tue., Thur., 6 p.m. - 9 p.m.	Dec. 14
WEB PUBLISHING	16	Wednesdays 6 p.m. - 9 p.m.	Nov. 19	Wednesdays 6 p.m. - 9 p.m.	Nov. 19
CNE Express Track (7 courses)	26	Mon. & Wed. 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.	Mar. 9	Tue. & Thur. 12:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.	Jan. 6
CNE Regular Track (7 courses)	52	Mon. & Wed. 6 p.m. - 9 p.m.	Mar. 9	Tue. & Thur. 6 p.m. - 9 p.m.	Nov. 13
WINDOWS NT MCSE Express Track (6 courses)	28	Tue. & Thur. 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.	Feb. 3	Mon. & Wed. 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.	Feb. 2
WINDOWS NT MCSE Regular Track (6 courses)	75	Tue. & Thur. 6 p.m. - 9 p.m.	Feb. 3	Mon. & Wed. 6 p.m. - 9 p.m.	Dec. 16
"A+" PC SUPPORT ENGINEER (part day)	18	Wed. 12:30-4:30 p.m.	Dec. 3	Sun. 8 a.m. - 12 noon	Jan. 4
MULTIMEDIA DEVELOPMENT using Director	13	Wed. 9 a.m. - 12 noon	Feb. 25	Sun. 2 p.m. - 5 p.m.	Dec. 7
VISUAL C++	10	Mon. 3 p.m. - 6 p.m.	Dec. 1	Mon. 2 p.m. - 5 p.m.	Dec. 8
VISUAL BASIC	10	Mon. 12 noon - 3 p.m.	Jan. 5	Wed. 6 p.m. - 9 p.m.	Jan. 7
C/C++ PROGRAMMING	22	Mon. 5 p.m. - 9 p.m.	Nov. 17	Mon. 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.	Nov. 17
COREL DRAW	16	Mon. 9 a.m. - 12 noon	Dec. 1	Wed. 3 p.m. - 6 p.m.	Dec. 3

USER'S COURSES

Courses	Intro to PC	Excel I	Excel II	Word I	Word II	Internet Express	Access for Users
Tel Aviv	Thur., Dec. 11 1-5 p.m.	Tue., Dec. 9 1-5 p.m.	Sun., Dec. 14 1-5 p.m.	Wed., Dec. 10 1-5 p.m.	Mon., Dec. 15 1-5 p.m.	Fri., Dec. 12 9 a.m. - 12 noon	Wed., Dec. 10 5-9 p.m.
Jerusalem	Tue., Dec. 9 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.	Thur., Dec. 11 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.	Thur., Dec. 11 1-5 p.m.	Tue., Dec. 9 5-9 p.m.	Tue., Dec. 9 1-5 p.m.	Fri., Dec. 12 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.	Sun., Jan. 11 5-9 p.m.

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Sharon Area

RENTALS

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SALE

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SALES: 2m luxury apt. + balcony, pool, view \$180,000

SALES: 3m, luxury apt. Prime location From \$235,000

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SALES

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RELIGIOUS SERVICES

Notices in this feature, which appears every Friday, are charged

Penguins keep unbeaten streak intact

PITTSBURGH (AP) — Fredrik Olausson and Alex Hicks scored third-period goals as the Pittsburgh Penguins extended their unbeaten streak to six games with a 3-2 win over the Carolina Hurricanes on Wednesday night.

The Penguins are 5-0-1 with a season-best four-game winning streak. They have won all three of their games against Carolina this season.

Islanders 4, Rangers 1

Robert Reichel had three goals and an assist, including his 400th NHL point, to help the Islanders snap a four-game winless streak at home.

Tommy Salo, whose last win at home came against the Rangers on October 30, helped the Islanders snap a two-game losing streak by stopping 17 shots. Kenny Jonsson also scored for the Islanders.

Alexei Kovalev broke Salo's shutout with a wrist shot with 3:16 left in the game. Mike Richter stopped 21 shots as the Rangers suffered their second loss in two nights and their fourth loss in their last five games. They were beaten

4-2 Tuesday night by Vancouver in Mark Messier's return game to Madison Square Garden.

Flyers 3, Sabres 1

Rod Brind'Amour scored two goals and Garth Snow stopped 26 shots to lead Philadelphia to an away win.

Edie DeJardins scored the other goal for the Flyers, who snapped a two-game losing streak. Michael Peca scored for Buffalo, which has lost four of its last six games.

Red Wings 4, Senators 1

Kris Draper had a goal and an assist as the Red Wings extended their unbeaten streak to nine games.

Canadiens 6, Capitals 5

Shayne Corson and Mark Recchi scored two goals each as Montreal ended its seven-game losing streak against the Capitals with a victory in the final professional hockey game at the US Airways Arena.

Corson and Recchi also had one assist apiece to help Montreal to its first win against Washington since January 1996 and first victory in Landover since February 4,

1994.

Lightning 3, Avalanche 3

Alex Selivanov's goal with 6:48 left in regulation gave host Tampa Bay a tie with Colorado.

Selivanov picked up a loose puck just outside the crease and put a backhand over Avalanche goaltender Patrick Roy.

Panthers 10, Bruins 5

Host Florida, playing its first game under new coach Bryan Murray, routed Boston 10-5 with a franchise-high goal total as Ray Sheppard scored three times.

Stars 4, Kings 1

Surging Mike Modano had two goals and an assist and Ed Belfour made 24 saves as Dallas won at home.

Modano, who started the night as the NHL's scoring leader, improved his point total to 34. Linemates Jamie Langenbrunner and Jere Lehtinen had a goal and an assist each.

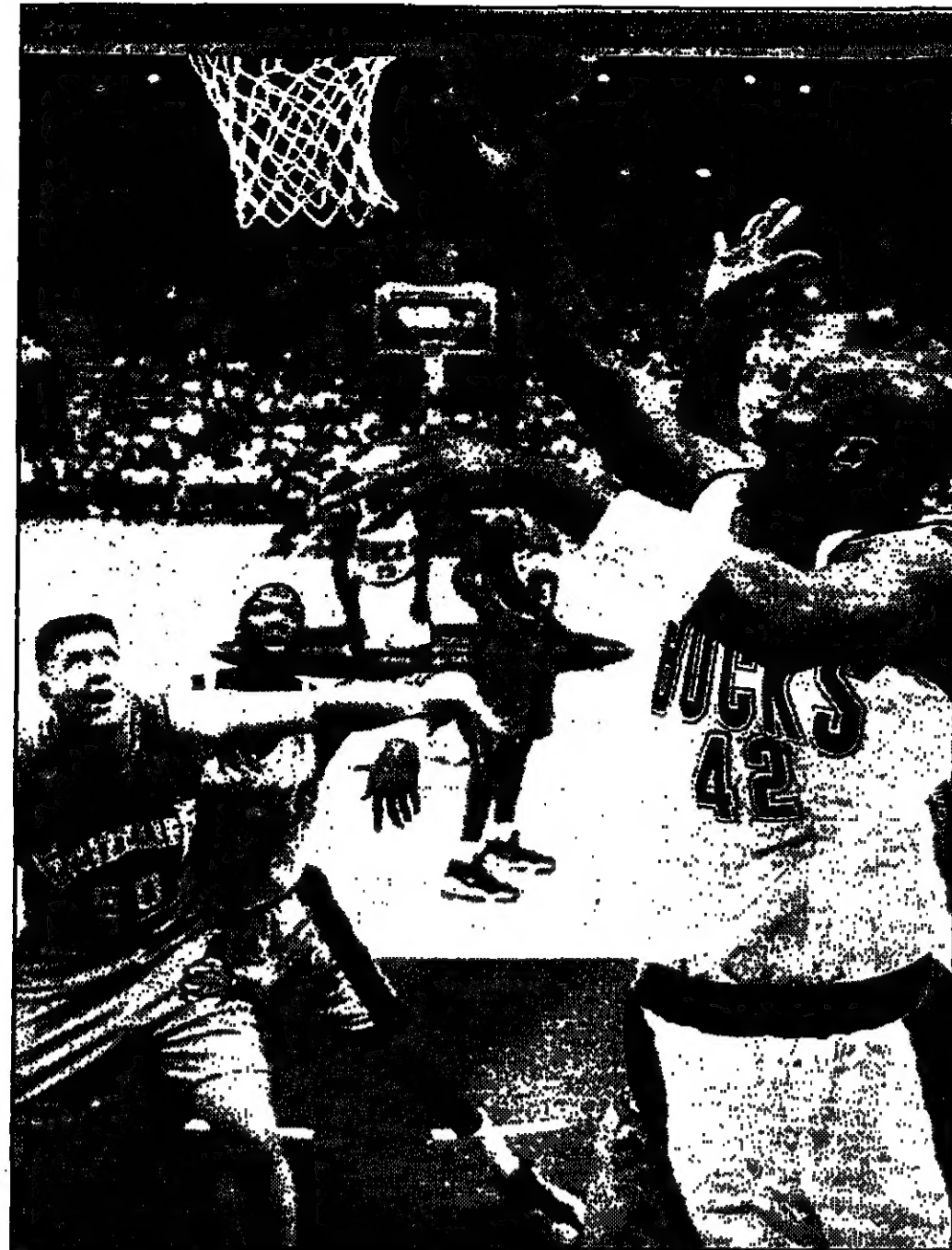
Ducks 2, Mighty Ducks 0

Host Anaheim snapped Martin Brodeur's 12-game winning streak as they won behind Guy Herbert's sharp goaltending.

NHL						
EASTERN CONFERENCE						
Atlantic Division						
	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
New Jersey	14	7	0	28	68	40
Philadelphia	14	8	3	31	72	58
Washington	13	9	3	29	78	69
N.Y. Islanders	10	10	4	24	64	64
N.Y. Rangers	8	11	7	23	67	72
Florida	8	12	4	20	58	73
Tampa Bay	4	16	3	11	47	81
Northeast Division						
Montreal	15	7	3	33	82	59
Pittsburgh	13	9	5	31	76	68
Boston	11	10	4	26	63	69
Carolina	9	12	4	22	68	73
Ottawa	9	12	4	22	63	64
Buffalo	7	12	4	18	60	70
Central Division						
St. Louis	16	6	4	36	88	60
Dallas	16	7	4	36	86	62
San Jose	15	8	2	32	74	55
Phoenix	12	9	2	26	70	62
Chicago	9	13	3	21	54	65
Toronto	8	12	3	19	45	63
Pacific Division						
Colorado	11	6	8	30	74	64
Los Angeles	11	9	4	26	79	68
Anaheim	10	11	5	25	60	72
San Jose	9	15	2	20	68	78
Edmonton	7	12	6	20	57	78
Vancouver	7	14	3	17	65	83

NHL						
WESTERN CONFERENCE						
Central Division						
	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
St. Louis	16	6	4	36	88	60
Dallas	16	7	4	36	86	62
San Jose	15	8	2	32	74	55
Phoenix	12	9	2	26	70	62
Chicago	9	13	3	21	54	65
Toronto	8	12	3	19	45	63
Pacific Division						
Colorado	11	6	8	30	74	64
Los Angeles	11	9	4	26	79	68
Anaheim	10	11	5	25	60	72
San Jose	9	15	2	20	68	78
Edmonton	7	12	6	20	57	78
Vancouver	7	14	3	17	65	83

NHL						
WESTERN CONFERENCE						
Pacific Division						
	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
Colorado	11	6	8	30	74	64
Los Angeles	11	9	4	26	79	68
Anaheim	10	11	5	25	60	72
San Jose	9	15	2	20	68	78
Edmonton	7	12	6	20	57	78
Vancouver	7	14	3	17	65	83



THE BUCKS STOP HERE — Milwaukee Bucks' Tyrone Hill drives to the basket in first-quarter action as Grizzlies Bryant Reeves (50) gets set for a rebound. The Bucks won, 101-82.

Hawks tie OT win mark

TORONTO (AP) — The Atlanta Hawks tied an NBA record with their 11th consecutive overtime victory and sent the Toronto Raptors to their 11th straight loss with a 109-104 in double overtime Wednesday night.

Rookie Ed Gray's 3-point basket with 50 seconds left in the second overtime game gave Atlanta a 105-104 lead. Gray also hit a pair of free throws with 4.5 seconds left to seal the victory.

Atlanta's overtime victory streak, which dates to the 1994-95 season, matches the 11 straight overtime victories by the San Antonio Spurs from November 1979, to February 1983.

Lakers 118, Celtics 103

Elden Campbell scored 22 points and Nick Van Exel and Eddie Jones led a decisive third-quarter run as Los Angeles rebounded from its only loss of the season to win on the road.

Antoine Walker had 28 points and 12 rebounds for the Celtics, who won six of their previous seven games to climb above .500 for the first time since opening night.

Heat 84, Magic 60

Visiting Miami snapped the NBA's longest winning streak for

the second straight night to take over sole possession of first place in the Atlantic Division.

The Heat, who ended the Lakers' season-opening, 11-game streak Tuesday night, played the same kind of suffocating defense to stop Orlando's stretch of success at six straight wins.

Cavaliers 95, 76ers 89

Shawn Kemp and Wesley Person scored 18 points apiece as Cleveland used its inside advantage to win on the road.

The Cavaliers outrebounded Philadelphia 45-36 and outscored them 50-34 in the paint.

Trail Blazers 90

Timberwolves 96

Rookie Alvin Williams scored eight of his 12 points in the fourth quarter for Portland.

Rashad Wallace scored 16 points and Gary Trent added 14 as Portland improved to 7-2 on the road.

Bucks 101, Grizzlies 82

Glenn Robinson scored 25 points and Terrell Brandon had 14, including 12 during the decisive third quarter, as Milwaukee won at home.

The victory helped the Bucks avenge a loss at Vancouver 11 days ago in which they blew a

14-point lead in the third quarter. Shaheed Abdul-Rahim had 19 points for the Grizzlies, who lost for the seventh time in eight road games.

Ray Allen and Armon Gilliam each had 14 points for Milwaukee.

Wizards 98, Spurs 94

Rod Strickland had 23 points and 17 assists as visiting Washington snapped a six-game losing streak.

Washington, which shot 55 percent, won for the first time since November 13. Juwan Howard scored 25 points and Chris Webber 24 as the Wizards won despite shooting 13-for-30 from the free throw line.

Suns 111, Nets 99

Danny Manning scored his 10,000th career point and Phoenix made all 25 of its free throws to win at home.

Antonio McDyess paced six Phoenix players in double figures with 20 points and 10 rebounds. Jason Kidd finished with 16 points while Manning, Rex Chapman and Steve Nash all had 14 and Kevin Johnson 10.

Clippers 99, Kings 97

Rodney Rogers had 20 points and 12 rebounds as LA ended a nine-game losing streak with its first home victory of the season.

Myers signs with Jays

NEW YORK (AP) — Randy Myers says rumormongers that he was a key factor in his decision to bolt Baltimore for an \$18 million, three-year contract with the Toronto Blue Jays.

"Finances weren't as big a thing as much as the turmoil in Baltimore last season," Myers said Wednesday, still angered over manager Davey Johnson's forced departure from the Orioles.

"The way things were handled on and off the field weren't up to the standards I expect from an organization," Myers said.

Toronto, trying to compete in the AL East following a last-place season, also signed catcher Darrin Fletcher, who played for Montreal last season, to a \$4.35m, two-year contract.

San Francisco, meanwhile, resigned outfielder Stan Javier, agreeing to a \$3.5m, two-year contract. But the Giants lost right-handed reliever Doug Henry, who agreed with the Houston Astros.

Seattle exercised left-hander Jamie Moyer's \$2.3m option for 1999, and the New York Mets reached halfway around the world to sign a Japanese high school pitcher, agreeing to a minor league contract with Jui Ushirotsu, an 18-year-old left-hander.

Cleveland closed in on a former Met, Dwight Gooden. And on the injury front, Los Angeles Dodgers' reliever Antonio Osuna hurt his right knee pitching for Hermosillo in the Mexican Winter League and was scheduled to have arthroscopic surgery yesterday.

Myers praised new Orioles manager Ray Miller, who had been the team's pitching coach, but said he wasn't sure how long Miller would retain the position under owner Peter Angelos, who has had four managers since buying the Orioles in October 1993.

Tim Johnson, Toronto's new manager, was Myers' preference.

"He's going to be a manager who will probably be here the three years with the organization, if not more," Myers said. "That's the kind of stability I could not be sure of in Baltimore and, yes, that was a part of the decision."

Gooden, whose \$3m option was declined by the New York Yankees, appears set to pitch with Cleveland next season. He was 9-5 with a 4.91 ERA last season and was on the disabled list for three months following hernia surgery. He would join Chad Wright, Charles Nagy, Jaret Oates and Bartolo Colon in Cleveland's rotation.

Atlanta	11	6	33	79	64
Los Angeles	10	6	33	79	68
San Antonio	9	8	33	79	68
San Jose	9	15	20	68	78
Phoenix	7	12	30	57	78
San Francisco	7	14	33	65	83

Champion 1 0

NBA				
EASTERN CONFERENCE				
Atlantic Division				
	W	L	Pct.	GB
Atlanta	10	4	.714	—
New York	9	5	.643	1 1/2
Orlando	9	5	.615	1 1/2
New Jersey	8	5	.615	1 1/2
Pistons	7	7	.500	3
Washington	5	10	.333	5 1/2
Philadelphia	3	11	.273	5 1/2
Central Division				
Indiana	12	2	.857	—
Chicago	9	3	.750	2
Charlotte	8	5	.615	3 1/2
Phoenix	7	6	.571	4
Cleveland	8	6	.538	4 1/2
Atlanta	5	6	.455	5 1/2
etroit	5	10	.333	7 1/2
Portland	1	13	.071	11
WESTERN CONFERENCE				
Midwest Division				
	W	L	Pct.	GB
San Antonio	8	4	.671	—
Pistons	8	5	.615	1 1/2
Utah	7	6	.538	2 1/2
Minnesota	6	7	.462	3 1/2
Vancouver	6	9	.400	4 1/2
Dallas	3	10	.231	5 1/2
Denver	0	12	.000	7
Pacific Division				
LA Lakers	12	1	.923	—
Seattle	11	3	.786	1 1/2
Portland	10	2	.800	2 1/2
San Francisco	8	4	.714	2 1/2
Sacramento	5	9	.357	7 1/2
LA Clippers	2	12	.143	10 1/2
Golden State	1	11	.083	10 1/2

NBA				
WESTERN CONFERENCE				
Pacific Division				
	W	L	Pct.	GB
LA Lakers	12	1	.923	—
Seattle	11	3	.786	1 1/2
Portland	10	4	.714	2 1/2
Sacramento	5	9	.357	7 1/2
LA Clippers	2	12	.143	10 1/2
Golden State	1	11	.083	10 1/2
NBA				
CENTRAL CONFERENCE				
Midwest Division				
	W	L	Pct.	GB
Chicago Bulls	12	1	.923	—
Indiana Pacers	11	3	.786	1 1/2
Atlanta Hawks	10	4	.714	2 1/2
Philadelphia 76ers	5	9	.357	7 1/2
Washington Wizards	2	12	.143	10 1/2
Orlando Magic	1	11	.083	10 1/2
NBA				
SOUTHERN CONFERENCE				
Atlantic Division				
	W	L	Pct.	GB
Philadelphia 76ers	12	1	.923	—
Atlanta Hawks	11	3	.786	1 1/2
Washington Wizards	10	4	.714	2 1/2
Charlotte Hornets	5	9	.357	7 1/2
Orlando Magic	2	12	.143	10 1/2
Boston Celtics	1	11	.083	10 1/2
NBA				
SOUTHERN CONFERENCE				
Central Division				
	W	L	Pct.	GB
San Antonio Spurs	12	1	.923	—
Phoenix Suns	11	3	.786	1 1/2
San Antonio Spurs	10	4	.714	2 1/2
Portland Trail Blazers	5	9	.357	7 1/2
Los Angeles Lakers	2	12	.143	10 1/2
Golden State Warriors	1	11	.083	10 1/2
NBA				
SOUTHERN CONFERENCE				
Pacific Division				
	W	L	Pct.	GB
LA Lakers	12	1	.923	—
Seattle	11	3	.786	1 1/2
Portland	10	4	.714	2 1/2
Sacramento	5	9	.357	7 1/2
LA Clippers	2	12	.143	10 1/2
Golden State	1	11	.083	10 1/2

NFL						
AMERICAN CONFERENCE						
Quarterbacks						
	Att	Com	Yds	TD	Int	
Elway, Den.	340	210	2724	18	7	
George, Dak.	401	220	3025	23	8	
Bruneau, Jac.	294	172	2153	13	5	
Bledsoe, N.E.	392	229	2884	21	12	
O'Donnell, N.J.	324	185	2039	14	3	
Gruch, C.	300	174	1892	11	6	
Marino, M.	416	241	2883	11	8	
Poon, Sea.	446	241	2883	11	8	
Blake, G.	317	184	2125	8	7	
Stewart, P.	312	168	2125	8	7	
Running Backs						
	Att	Yds	Avg	LG	TD	
Bruneau, Jac.	312	1469	4.7	50	12	
Bruneau, Jac.	312	1469	4.7	50	12	
Bruneau, Jac.	312	1469	4.7	50	12	
Bruneau, Jac.	312	1469	4.7	50	12	
Bruneau, Jac.	312	1469	4.7	50	12	
Bruneau, Jac.	312	1469	4.7	50	12	
Bruneau, Jac.	312	1469	4.7	50	12	
Bruneau, Jac.	312	1469	4.7	50	12	
Bruneau, Jac.	312	1469	4.7	50	12	

Inside

**Myers
flies from
O's to Jays**
Page 23

**Davis Cup
arouses
national
passions**
Page 22

Sports Editors
Joe Hoffman & Ori Lewis

**Israel
hoopsters
face Ukraine
tomorrow**

By BRIAN FREEMAN

The national basketball team brings its act on the road tomorrow night against Ukraine in Game 2 of the qualifying round for the 1999 European Championships.

Israel is coming off an impressive 95-64 opening victory over Belarus on Wednesday in which every man on the team gave his all, playing suffocating defense and finding an open teammate for an easy score on offense.

Ukraine, which fell to 0-1 in the 10-game preliminary round with an 83-66 loss at home to group favorites Spain, should be a tougher challenge for the Israelis.

The Ukrainians finished a respectable 13th in the European Championships which concluded this past summer, its highest placing so far since breaking away from the Soviet Union.

The other contests in the group tomorrow will pit Spain against hosts England and Belarus on the road against Denmark.

Israel will also take on Denmark next Wednesday.

The first two teams in each of the five six-team groups advance to the finals in France in 1999 along with the four best third-placed clubs. The hosts and defending champions Yugoslavia earn an automatic berth to the Final 16.

**Cruyff in hospital,
has heart complaint**

AMSTERDAM (Reuters) — Johan Cruyff was in a stable condition in an Amsterdam hospital yesterday after being admitted 24 hours earlier with a heart complaint.

The Vrije Universiteit Hospital said Cruyff, 50, had been admitted to the cardiac unit.

A statement said he was doing well, was in a stable condition and would remain in hospital for further observation.

Cruyff, sacked by Barcelona in 1996, had double by-pass heart surgery in 1991. He returned to the Netherlands, commenting occasionally on major games.

Manchester United qualify for Champions League quarterfinals

MANCHESTER (AP) — Manchester United cruised into the European Champions Cup quarterfinals last night, following a 3-0 victory over Slovakia's FC Kosice in front of 55,000 at Old Trafford.

Needing only a point against a team which had not even gained one in four matches, United made sure of all three with a match to spare. A strike by Andy Cole just before half-time was followed by an own goal by Kosice substitute Lubomir Faktor five minutes from the end, and Teddy Sheringham bent a 25-meter shot into the net for the third in injury time.

The result gave United a maximum 15 points from five matches and Kosice remained last in Group B with none. United visit Juventus in the final group match on December 10 with the Italian club in danger of going out.

Dynamo Kiev 1, PSV Eindhoven 1

Dynamo Kiev secured a place in the quarter-finals with a 1-1 group C draw against PSV Eindhoven.

Dynamo's Serhiy Rebrov gave the home side the perfect start in the 19th minute, slotting home a brilliant cutback from strike partner Andriy Shevchenko.

The second half was more evenly balanced, and the unmarked Gilles De Bilde levelled in the 65th minute when he caught the defence napping, bringing down a looping cross well with his chest before slotting the ball home.

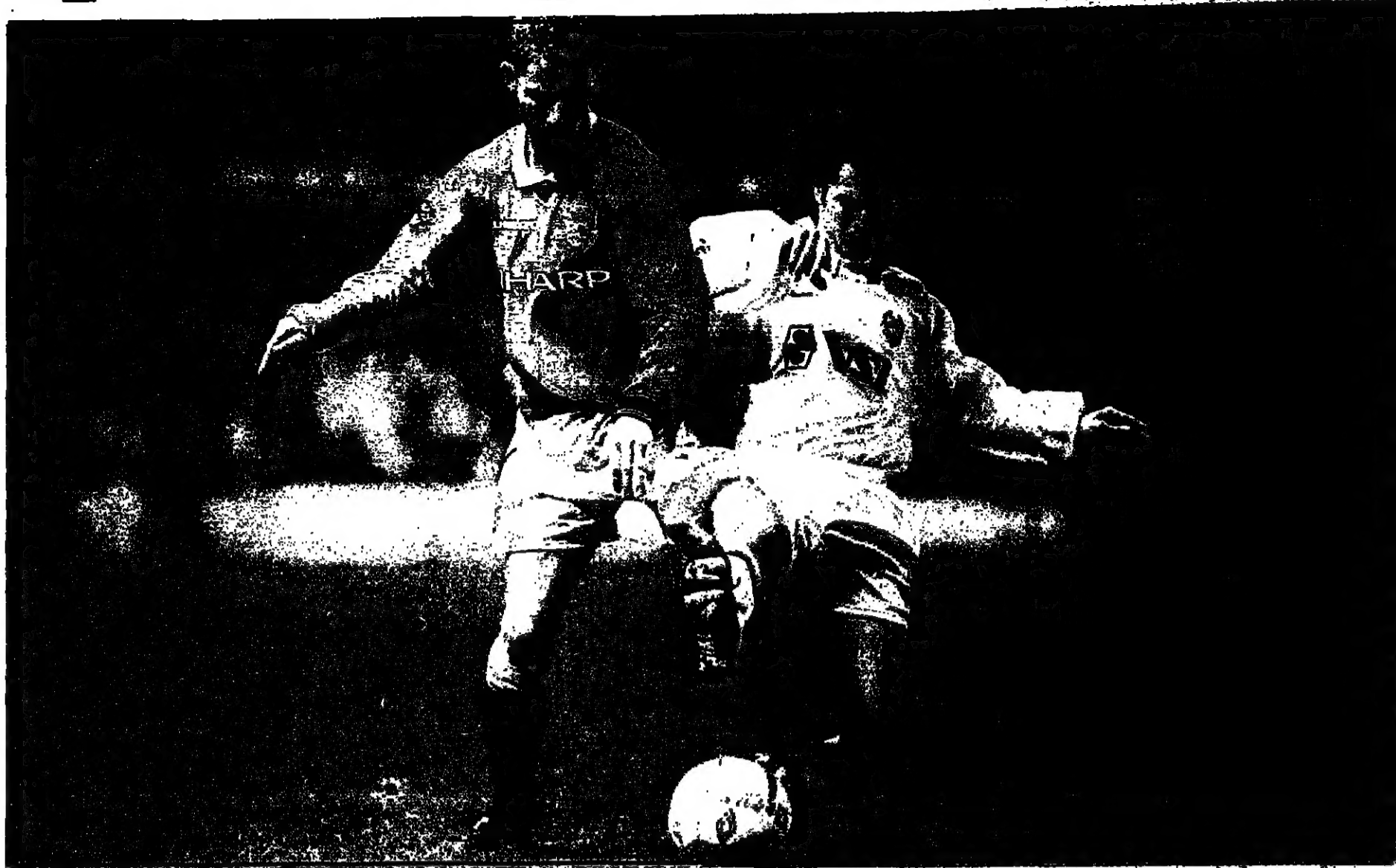
Shortly before that PSV coach Dick Advocaat, despairing of the win his side needed to keep their hopes alive, was ordered to leave the touchline by the referee for shouting advice to his players. He stormed off into the stands.

Borussia Dortmund 4, Galatasaray 1

European champions Borussia Dortmund made sure of a place in the quarter-finals by crushing Turkish side Galatasaray 4-1 at home.

Dortmund lead group A with 12 points — four more than second placed Parma of Italy.

Young Russian midfielder Vladimir But put Dortmund in



Manchester United's Nicky Butt (left) is tackled by FC Kosice's Vladislav Zvara during United's 3-0 win at Old Trafford last night.

front from close range in the 22nd minute and striker Heiko Herrlich made it 2-0 with a header 12 minutes later.

Substitute Michael Zorc, who had only just come in for playmaker Andreas Moeller, added a third two minutes into the second half and made it 4-0 from the penalty spot in the 86th minute.

Attacking midfielder Ergun Penbe reduced the arrears for the visitors in the next minute.

Parma 2, Sparta Prague 2

In Parma, the home side scram-

bled a 2-2 draw against Sparta Prague after three goals in a dramatic final three minutes turned their group A match on its head.

Parma had appeared to be cruising to victory thanks to a first half strike from Enrico Chiesa but Sparta equalized through Jiri Novotny with the match already in extra time.

The Czechs stunned the home crowd with another goal seconds later from second half substitute Josef Obajdin.

Then, in the 95th minute of

time actually played, Maniero was tugged down in the box and Chiesa converted the resulting penalty to keep alive Parma's albeit fading hopes of a place in the European Cup quarter-finals.

Rosenborg 2, Real Madrid 0

In Trondheim, northern Norway, Rosenborg upset Real Madrid 2-0 in their Group D match in bone-chilling temperatures.

Roar Strand gave the Norwegian champions a 1-0 lead with a diving header against the

run of play in the 42nd minute as

Real Madrid slithered on a pitch icy from a heavy frost in temperatures of minus eight celsius.

Harald Brattbakk made it 2-0 early in the second half, delighting the 19,000 crowd in his last game in the Lerkendal stadium before a planned transfer to Celtic.

The result left the two teams level on 10 points at the top of group D with one game left and

Real Madrid were unlikely not to score. Fernando Hierro hit the post from a free kick and Fernando Morientes hit the crossbar.

Champions League results last night:

Group A: Parma 2, Sparta Prague 2; Borussia Dortmund 4, Galatasaray 1.

Group B: Manchester United 3, Kosice 0.

Group C: Dynamo Kiev 1, PSV Eindhoven 1.

Group D: Rosenborg 2, Real Madrid 0; Porto 2, Olympiakos 1.

Chang plays Bjorkman, Sampras faces Larsson on opening day of US-Sweden Davis Cup final

GOTHENBURG (AP) — Pete Sampras and Michael Chang have a combined career singles record of 9-4 against the Swedish opponents they face on the opening day of the Davis Cup final.

But there are some trends that could worry the Americans.

Jonas Bjorkman beat Chang in straight sets the last time they played and Magnus Larsson is the only player to have beaten Sampras twice this year.

"He's beaten me before, he's confident," said Sampras, who lost the last

two encounters against Larsson, ranked No. 25 in the world. Sampras leads 6-3.

"He's played me tough, not only this year," Sampras said.

"He's an awkward player, lanky, not an easy guy to play." "He serves quite big and backs it up with big groundstrokes (ground strokes). He's very talented. He moves well. He's confident, he's beat me before."

"But I feel like I'm playing well. I just need to go out and do it," Sampras said after Thursday's draw for the best-of-five tie.

Sampras comes here after clinching the ATP Tour World Championship for the fourth time, collecting eight titles this year (including Wimbledon and the Australian Open) and making sure of finishing as No. 1 in the world for the fifth year in a row.

The Americans have been practicing on the fast indoor carpet of the 11,000-seat Scandinavium hall since the weekend.

Chang, whose match against Bjorkman will open the three-day tie, has had a disappointing indoor season.

this fall with a 1-3 record and he lost 6-4, 7-5 to Bjorkman at the ATP championship in Hannover, earlier this month. It was Chang's first defeat against Bjorkman in four encounters.

"I think I was able to learn a little bit from that match," Chang said. "It's a whole new situation, a whole new ball game."

"I'm hoping to be able to turn things around here in Sweden." For tomorrow's doubles, Todd Martin and Jonathan Stark were nominated for the Americans, while Bjorkman and

Nicklas Pietrangeli make up the Swedish pair. The doubles teams can be changed, however, up to one hour before the start of the match. The fourth player of the Swedish team is Thomas Enqvist.

The reverse singles are scheduled for Sunday.

Sweden's hopes hinge on Bjorkman beating both Chang and Sampras and picking up a potentially decisive point in the doubles. Sweden have never won the title without winning the doubles.

Harazi: I'm leaving Salamanca

By ORI LEWIS

Israel international striker Ronen Harazi has lost his patience with Spanish club Salamanca and yesterday announced his intention to leave the club as soon as possible.

Harazi, Israel's leading goal scorer among active players, was sold to the Spanish first division club by Beitar Jerusalem at the beginning of the current season, but has failed to command a place in the team's starting lineup. Indeed, he has seen almost no league action at all since arriving on the Iberian peninsula.

A FIFA arbitration panel last week set Harazi's sale price at \$1.5 million after Salamanca and Beitar failed to reach agreement over the price of the player. So far, however, the Spaniards have seen no return at all on their investment.

Harazi held a press conference on Wednesday in which he said wanted to clear up misinterpretations which he claims both the Spanish and Israeli media have built up around his predicament. "There is nothing wrong with me or with my form, indeed, I am in exactly in the same shape as I was when I arrived here at the beginning of the season."

"One thing is clear, it will be easy for me to find a club when I am based here (as opposed to Israel)," Harazi said.

On the home front, there will not be any National League and Second Division action this weekend as both divisions are taking the weekend to play a round of Toto Cup games.

SCOREBOARD

ENGLISH SOCCER — Results of matches played on Wednesday night. Premier League: Chelsea 2, Everton 0. Division One: Middlesbrough 0, Nottingham Forest 0. Division Three: Chester 2, Swansea 0. FA Cup, first round, replay: Solihull 3, Darlington 3, (after extra time, Darlington won 4-2 on penalties).

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